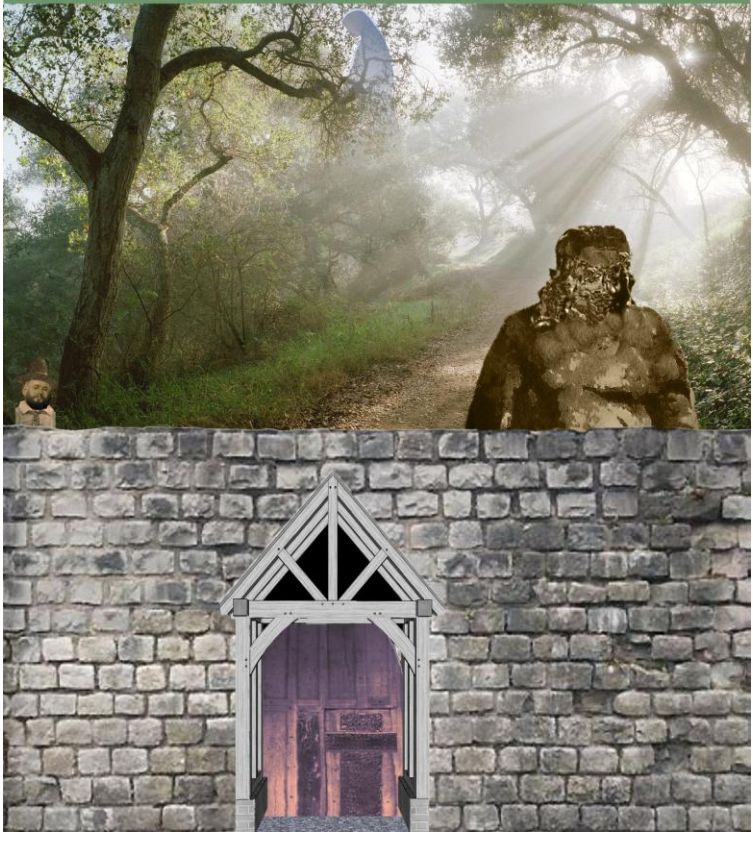
Revisiting The Pilgrim's Progress

From This to That

Steve H Hakes



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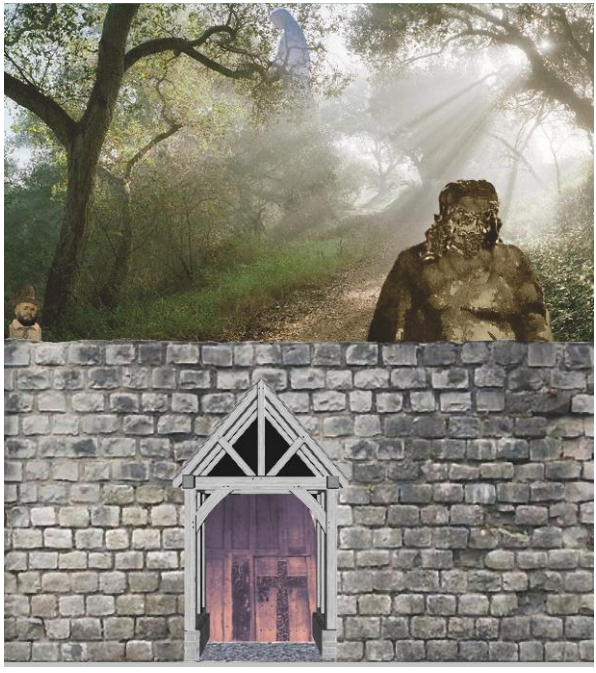
From This to That



Steve H Hakes

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Paperback ISBN:	978-1-8380946-7-6
Hardback ISBN:	979-8-4230351-4-3
Kindle ISBN:	978-1-8380946-6-9
V260309170723:	simbolinian@outlook.com

Dedicated to the memory of
Paul Bunch
a Mattersey Hall mate
a selfless servant of the saviour
Yahweh was his shepherd
1961–2022

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Preface

There once was a man named John Bunyan—tinker, thinker, terror. The local police locked him up for many a long year, for preaching Christianity without permission. Though abused, John took heart, and wrote a book in dream style, which would reach beyond prison doors. In his dream, characteristics became characters who, beyond their core value, had the values of spiritual orientation and opinions. In short, they were coloured in with personality 'clothing'. His dream has inspired many.

Recently watching the 2008 DVD, *Pilgrim's Progress: Journey to Heaven*, I wondered how it would be if John had dreamed somewhat differently. Please revisit his old story with me, and reimagine it with me. His second dream—of Christian's wife's subsequent more pastoral journey—I have left to better dreamers.

Even as wine improves with a taste of age, so I have employed a dated style. To feel that we belong to previous generations—without whom we would not be here—is good. They have wisdom to teach us, which only our chronological snobbery would deny. Forget for now about H-bombs, hydrogen cars, and the World Wide Web. I invite you to relax within the outer picture of its social setting, to enjoy the inner picture—the message wrapped in story—to settle down and journey with Acharin, a sinner who became a saint.

Steve H Hakes 2021

Chapter 1

The Alarm

Behold I saw in a dream, that a poorly dressed man, with his back to his house, looked beyond. That man, named Acharin, had a book in his hands, and reading it had brought to his mind, his sinfulness. It was not without some justification, therefore, that some had called it a dangerous book, and sought to ban its reading. He felt that his sin was like a heavy burden, chained and padlocked to his back, and crushing his spirit within. Indeed, to those with eyes to see, it had become a visible burden.

He had long known that the king of the holy mountain was too holy to abide sin. And what was sin, save not living according to the right? And did the king not always advise the right, the wellbeing? And what was sin, save not having a heart in perfect tune with the right? And was the king not the heart of right? But then, Acharin had seldom been bothered about sin, and seldom been bothered about the king. Now he was bothered about both. His big question was, how could he, a sinner, ever hope to stand—and without shame—before the sinless one, the king of all kings?

As the sun set, Acharin stepped back with a sigh into his house. His wife had prepared, as usual, a scrumptious meal. As usual, he praised her cookery, and thanked her for her efforts. She was a good wife, and a good mother to their children. He had much to be thankful for. That evening, though, he felt depressed. And, though he tried to pretend as if nothing was wrong, his family soon sensed his mood. When questioned, he opened up to Achiana, his wife.

"My beloved, the Book tells me that we are living at enmity with the king. If he were to judge us here and now, we could not stand. It also tells of a city about to be destroyed. Its people were warned to flee away from it—even if in the bleak midwinter. It seems to me, that we too must flee from this city we are in." For they and their friends formed a fellowship of apathy and of inner rebellion against the king. It was like they formed a city, a city of evil, a city due for destruction. And it seemed, in the dream, that indeed their city was named, Destruction.

"My dear, get you off to bed," said she, "for you need now a good night's sleep, and some wifely comfort. Have you not been working too hard of late? Still, tomorrow will be another day. And please, do not read that book tonight. You must cast it from your mind, if you can. Else it might drive us all to distraction." She smiled sweetly at him, as she covered her pain.

Well, he tried hard to follow her advice, and lay down his head. Yet try as he might, could not clear his head of such things. In fact, it seemed to him that for all her comfort, he tossed and turned the whole night long,

like a soul in torment. Or had in fact he been cast into a long dream, inspired by the Book?

The next day—or did the dream of the dreamer, dream?—his family wondered if counselling and medicines might help. Nay, said he, for he said that The King's Book was clear enough, and he believed that it spoke the truth. And why hide the truth?

Then they turned against him, setting their faces against him as a flint. After all, in pointing a finger at himself, he was pointing fingers at them, too. *Call yourself a bad apple, fine, but don't you be calling all of us apples in the bag, bad.* Yea his wife, his children, and his neighbourhood, turned against him. He was shot down, cancelled, cold-shouldered, and jeered. Increasingly isolated as bad news, he increasingly prayed—for them, and for himself. He knew that he was a lost soul, yet knew not where to turn.

One day he wandered alone in the countryside, reading the Book, and calling out for help. His city had become a nightmare, or say rather that he now saw it for what it was. As he bewailed his fate, he met a happy kind of man, who walked and whistled in the summer breeze. Whistling, that is, until he met Acharin. "Greetings sir", said the man. "Methinks you have a mighty weight on your mind, and the Book of Judgement in your hand. That is uncommonly good in these parts. I am called Evangelist of Gifford, and as a servant of the Book, perhaps I may be of service?"

Acharin looked at him without much hope. "Well, the Book says that we will all die—which nobody would deny. But it adds that after that, we will face judgement, and that I wish I could deny, for that is what I fear the

most. How, if it be possible, can I please the judge? And can I know it? It is such that weighs my mind. Or must I live as a felon, condemned without hope?"

And though the problem was within him, in the dream it was as if the place he lived in, was under condemnation. Should he not flee from Destruction? But flee to where? Where could he go to find peace? Evangelist then first confirmed his worst fears. Then he did warn him that he should indeed flee the city of Destruction. Then he did speak to him of Celestial City, the heavenly city, where he would be welcomed lovingly. It would be a journey of life, of both joy and hardship. But they who sought the king, would by the king be welcomed.

"See where I point?" asked Evangelist. "Hurry man, in that direction. For why waste you precious time? There is a spacious land there, which belongs to the king's son. And if you follow this path, you will come to the narrow gate—of shape like unto a cross—set within the wall. At that wicket gate you will find an old gatekeeper. He will gladly show you the way from there. And the king's highway, that runs through the prince's dominions, will lead you to Celestial City, wherein dwells the king. But count the cost, for it can be a long and hard journey, though it is the best of journeys. But if you will go, go now, before the sun goes down."

Chapter 2

Company is Pliable

Then I saw in my dream, that Acharin had always been a good runner, and that he took the advice and ran, in very truth, heading for the Gate. His family, who had been strolling nearby, espied him from afar. Afraid that he had lost his mind, they cried after him to stop and to come back. But all they could hear, was him crying aloud that he ran for eternal life, and would not be as the wife of some man named Lot. And soon he could no longer be heard.

Now who on earth was Lot, let alone his wife, they asked? For they did not know him from Adam, nor his wife from Eve. But then, it was a rather big city. Acharin would no doubt hurry home, when hunger called him home.

Some living on the outskirts of Destruction, saw him running helter-skelter like a madman. Some thought it fun; some thought it tragedy. Two men felt an obligation to bring him back. They, at least, showed some practical concern. Now the older man was named Obstinate, and the younger was Pliable.

Acharin, having begun too fast, after a while did have to slow down. And yet it was pleasant to stand still,

under the green leaves, and to smell the wild herbs—a white patch of sweet scented garlic grew alongside the path. So it was that they, jogging along, caught up with him before he had gone too far. At first he thought that they too were runners, seeking sanctuary beyond the Gate. Yet he was soon put right, for Obstinate thus began to chide him. "Acharin, my friend, do you not know that your lunacy is the talk of the town? You tax our nerves, and upset your family. Come back with us now, and live again as you lived before. Gladly will we help you, if you will but let us."

Concerned for them, he told them that their city, named Destruction, would live up to its name, and be the destruction of all of them if they stayed there, sinking them lower than the grave. "It is not just death; it is death and destruction! No, I am not going back, but why do you both, not come with me?"

"What, would you have us forsake the homely comforts of Destruction? I will not heed such folly!" retorted Obstinate.

"But the homely familiar, is not worthy to be compared to the life the Book has told me about", said Acharin.

"You speak in jest, or you have lost your mind", retorted Obstinate. "What does your fanciful life offer, that can better what we have? Preposterous!"

"Good gracious, man," exclaimed Acharin, "what is corruptible life, compared to incorruptible and undefiled life? For earthly life is fleeting, and earthly treasures can be lost or stolen. I seek life far richer before death, and life imperishable beyond, where true riches will always be mine. Then I shall know at last the true meaning of life. And such can be yours, too. For, like names, which

can be both given while kept, so too are the inexhaustible riches of the king, offered freely to all who simply ask to receive. Come, let us go together through the Gate."

"Nay, my lad, that book has gone to your head", said Obstinate. "Turn back, O man, forswear your foolish ways."

"Never, nor are they foolish, except seemingly to those ensnared by worldly wisdom", said Acharin. "You are a farmer. You know that those who begin to plough should not look back. I am for going on, no turning back."

"Well, Pliable—and they said that *I* was Obstinate. Acharin here may need his name changing. Maybe as he said, he could take my name for free, and we will both have it. Obstinate young man! Well, let us leave him to his follies, and let us head back before the dusk."

However, to Acharin's delight and Obstinate's disgust, Pliable was now minded to depart from Destruction. For doubt had crossed his mind. What if Acharin was right—what if? Obstinate scowled his displeasure. "Two fools together! You are both, I deem, somewhat sick in the head."

Acharin said that the only sickness was seeking Destruction. "Mine is a glorious road, which goes ever on over rock and under tree, under cloud and under star, until it meets the beautiful gates of Celestial City. It is told in the Book," he said, "that the road was paid for by royal sweat and blood, that we might walk free."

"I *will* do it. I *will* go with you. You have fairly won me over", exclaimed Pliable excitedly. "But you do know the way, do you not?" Acharin answered him that Evangelist had directed him to the Gate, and assured him that from there he would learn of the highway: the

way in, would tell of the way forward. That seemed good enough for Pliable, and off they went. Whereas offended, Obstinate, refusing point blank to go on such a fool's errand, turned and returned to Destruction.

As they walked forward, Pliable asked about the joys ahead. Acharin replied that in the main he sought safety from Destruction. But that yes, there was much he had learnt about the joys of the journey, and delights of the destination—joys unspeakable and full of glory. The outlines were in the Book, and the Book was true, though many knaves and fools denied it. It spoke of eternal life in quality, and of life with royal protection on their journey if they walked in the king's will, and of life everlasting in quantity. There were tasters of joy in this life, and fullness in the life beyond.

Indeed, life in the prince's dominions would be wonderful. And when they reached Celestial City, why, they would be treated like royalty, forever praised and praising. For even the prince's dominions, were but a pale reflection of the joys that would be revealed in the king's own country, called Celestial Cosmos. One went through the City to reach it, but the City remained forever in sight, no matter how ever so far away you went. For the vision would travel with you. All the ills of Earth would be washed away, as if by a warm spring rain, never to be revisited. The servants of the king would bow before you, delighting in your company, even as they delight in their king. People, who had travelled to the City as pilgrims, would be pilgrims no more, but lords or ladies of Zion's king.

Pliable was visibly impressed, and sighed contentedly. “Well,” quoth he, “I am wishing to get to the prince’s dominions as quick as ever my feet will allow.” Acharin, however, was too troubled by his burden, to go as swiftly as Pliable would wish to walk. Indeed he marvelled that Pliable seemed unaware of his own burden of sin, and did not seem to seek because of his need. But having gotten his second wind, Acharin did manage a good pace. Then they travelled a while in silence, as the shades of night began to stir. Yet as he recalled the doom of his own sins, his fears returned.

Chapter 3

Lost Company

Then I saw in my dream, that they pushed on therefore the quicker, somewhat careless now of their surrounds. And so it was, that mindless of dangers ahead, they both fell into a mire, and their way to the way was no longer solid beneath their feet. For indeed they had wandered off the path to the Gate, and they began to flounder in slippery slime. And soon both were bedraggled in mud. That mire was called the Slough of Despond, and had swallowed up many a poor soul.

Outwardly, Acharin suffered the more, since his sin had taken on the form of weight, sinking him deeper into despondency. Was he too unworthy to enter through the Gate? Had his sins not found him out? Pliable, untroubled by the weight of sin, suffered more in second thoughts. For if pilgrims were so soon mired in mishap, how worse would it get if they gained the Gate? And his guide was already lost, like the blind leading the blind. Why had he ever trusted to such a man? Ikabod! The glory had departed, even before it had begun. Acharin was the loser, and Obstinate the winner. Managing to drag himself back to *terra firma*,

he lost all interest in his floundering friend, and made his way as best he could, back to *terra familia*, back to Destruction, no more to be a pilgrim.

Alone, Acharin sought to escape the Slough of Despond, ploughing his way towards the land nearer to the Gate, and further from Destruction. Still, it might not have gone well for him, but for the fact that a stranger named Help, eventually came along. Bogged down as he was, Acharin lamented that Evangelist had misguided him. Help replied that Acharin had taken a misstep from the way to the way in. But without further ado, Help pulled him from that lonely pit so full of mud and mire, and onto a rock firm beneath his weary feet.

Help then, from a basket, brought forth both fish and bread. And then he lit a fire, for the night had set in, and the night was chilly to both body and soul. They ate, and spoke about the Slough of Despond. Acharin asked why the king had not filled it in, or at least fenced it about, with warning signs posted around. Help replied that it was an ongoing battle, for there was an enemy who undermined all attempts to keep the path to the path, safe. Besides, he added, the path itself was firm enough, but the inattentive sometimes wandered off it.

Seekers—for despite what Pliable had presumed, none from Destruction were pilgrims, who had not entered through the narrow gate—carried their own enemy within. For if they became aware of their true unworthiness—no bad thing really—they could easily fall into doubt and despair, if they left the path to the

path. Then their traipsing to and fro, turned solid ground into quagmire. They then sunk in their own despondency. With the noise of fear ringing loud between their ears, some had become deaf even to the voice of Help. And Help could not help, unless he was heeded. And at the end of the day, the land was a debateable land, not fully in the king's control. But one day, the Slough would be no more.

As to poor Pliable, why, he made it safely home, all right. But little comfort did he draw from that. When questioned, he said that Acharin alone had stumbled into the Slough of Despond. Moreover—said he—since he could not have helped without becoming bemired, he had deserted the silly fool.

Some welcomed him back for his testimony against Acharin. But for the most part the city, despising Acharin but despising Pliable more, turned against him. They mocked him as a fickle friend, a vomitous dog returned to its vomit, and a washed pig wallowing again though in another mire. He was hissed and booed at, till he felt seven times worse off than had he never sought to leave them—a shabby man of shame. A fool, for having sought so much. A bigger fool, for having been put off by so little. Faithless man, never again to heed the faithful.

Having shown Acharin to a nearby stream, wherein he washed away all traces of the Slough, Help had returned to his home, near to the Slough. Then the seeker had returned to his journey, though his burden seemed heavier. Soon he had espied a well-dressed gentleman approaching him, whose name was Mister

Worldly Wiseman, who lived in an influential town named Carnal Policy. In truth, Mr. Wiseman had hoped to encounter Acharin, perhaps to return him to his home, for reports of his folly had spread far and wide, unsettling society.

"My good fellow, why travel ye with such a load on your back?" he asked. On Acharin confirming who he was and what were his intentions, Mr. Wiseman enquired about his family, and whether it might not be wise to return home. As to his burden, it was right that he sought to be done with it, but it was wrong to go forward with it.

When Acharin protested that Evangelist had pointed the way, Mr. Wiseman snorted in bullish contempt. "He is a dangerous and most troublesome creature. He has sent you on a path which has, I fear, inconvenienced you. But that is only the beginnings of your sorrows, if you persist on that way. Truly, gold will be holier if refined from its dross. But mark my words, it will be happier if unrefined. Would you face the perils of this path—exhaustion, pain, hunger, and aye, there be dragons—when your burden can be lifted with ease? Yea, you say, you would even face death to be free? But pray tell, whence came this burden upon you at the first? Ah, by the Book? I feared as much. For the Book messes with the heads of the feeble-minded, though I do not say that it has naught good to say to the high-minded."

Then was Acharin uneasy. "But sir, the Book but told me the truth, that a burden of sin I had, and that I could be delivered from it. And Evangelist swore by the Book."

"Aye, be free indeed. But by an easier way, my young friend, by an easier way. And such a remedy is at hand,

and shall yield unto you much safety, friendship, and content. Harken now unto my wisdom. In yonder village of Morality, there dwells a gentleman whose name is Legality, a very judicious and trustworthy man, who, forgetting what has gone before, will teach you how to live. He and Civility, his son, have delivered many a burdened soul, such as you. Many were simply afflicted in their own minds, with strange ideas of guilt and worthlessness. Why, with your burden eased, your family could move to our fair town, for we offer economical dwellings to all good folk, if they follow our rules."

Chapter 4

Not Heavenly Wise

Then I saw in my dream, that Acharin faltered. For should he not trust Mr. Wiseman? Might his cure lie just over the gentle hill nearby? Might his salvation lie within the goodly town of Morality? It seemed worth a try, and so he left his path to walk another. However, he soon found that seeking his cure from Legality, proved hard going, for the hill to his house was steep and deadly—a wrong step now, and he would surely fall to his death. Finally, in fear he halted, fearing to ascend, yet fearing to descend. Hot fumes, and tongues of fire, lept through deep crevices in the hillside. Deep rumblings of unease were within. And his burden threatened to topple him into the dark shadows below.

Crying out for rescue in dire straits, he was delighted, yet ashamed, to see again Evangelist, who stood below. Yet Evangelist first reproached his faithlessness, in setting aside the Gate. Acharin, holding on for dear life, then confessed that having gotten lost, a kindly Mr. Wiseman had directed him to a different destination. And that, he said, was for the lifting of his burden, or at least for the easier bearing thereof.

Clinging piteously to the precarious slope, he earnestly confessed that in part, he had longed simply to be rid of his sins. For then he hoped that he could once more enjoy his family life, without being troubled by sins. And Mr. Wiseman had promised that he could return to that life, perhaps living in a better town. "For in Morality, he told me, I could put my hope, and live in rented rooms under Legality the Landlord. Moreover he said that the dangers of your way, were needless. But now, I am stuck in a cleft stick."

Patiently, yet sternly, Evangelist said: "Hold still, for I have words yet to say unto you. To begin, I say unto you that it is written in the volume of the Book, that they fared ill who heeded not the king's voice that spoke on earth. Therefore, Acharin, put aside your doubt, and believe the good news. But do not put your trust in man. You now see that Mr. Wiseman did but direct you unto grave danger. And yet he spoke of the way being gentle. He speaks but the smooth language of this world, for he has no wisdom from above. You yourself still heed him, for you are still of this world. Indeed his pulpit speaks not of being cut off from the world, for he disdains that which is above. Yet his ways do but end in death.

"Verily he accounts me an enemy. For am I not a challenge to his way, and an affront to his morality? Yet like one who builds on sand, he stands on shaky ground. Therefore, turn your back on him and his ways, and cleave to the truth.

"Firstly, turn back to the way I have shown you. Has not the lord himself told us to seek the Gate, which leads to life, though all too few there be that find it? Therefore, seek again the true life.

"Secondly, put your own soul first. And only in its saving, can you save others. Even your beloved family must take the footstool, not the throne, of your heart. And in loving them where they ought to be, you will love them best. For they that become idols become demons. But your joy must first be in the gateway to the prince's dominions, if you are to rejoice in the prince of the dominions. And from that joy, Mr. Wiseman has robbed you. Therefore, in your heart call him thief.

"Thirdly, therefore, you must utterly abjure his way, for his way leads only to the death of joy. For know well that Mr. Legality is the son of Hagar the slave. And at best her blessings have helped, but were never able to deliver any from your burden. Indeed, she helped pave this path to the Gate, but not beyond. Now, though that old good was once best, it is now but a cheat of the best. As for Civility, he is but a soft-spoken hypocrite, and cannot help you beyond a certain polite neighbourliness.

"As to the little town of Morality, it is but a pale reflection of the True City. The problem is not that it is too strong, but that it is too weak. If you seek to dwell in Morality, you will not find Celestial City. If you seek to dwell in Celestial City and its land, you will find true morality."

Acharin, heeding Evangelist, took courage. Evangelist, to confirm his words—and thus to confirm Acharin—called aloud to the heavens. And with that, there came words and fire from out of the mountain onto which poor Acharin still feebly clung, making the very hair of his head lift heavenwards. And in a roll of thunder, came these words: "Those who rely on the works of the Law to please the king, are under a curse." Acharin bowed his head in awe. As the thunder departed, and

the mountain quieted, within a quiet sense of ease he quizzed Evangelist as to why anyone should be cursed for trying to please the king.

As he helped him safely down, Evangelist explained that it was not because its people tried well, that the curse did descend upon the Town of Torah, once the best of towns. Nay, it rested on all houses and hamlets and towns and cities. And that was because the heart of man was such, that none could perfectly please the king. Nay, not even the best of lives.

Indeed the king's chosen people, having been the best of peoples, had in past times failed him time and time again. A pilgrim named Paul, having escaped the bonds of Torah, had warned the neighbouring Goyim people, not to tie themselves—as he had been tied—to Torah. Since, he said, the town's history showed that perfection had never come through performance. And performance could never be perfect, he said, for the performers could never be perfect. Was it not thus a hopeless conundrum, an impossible task?

So, the worst of people, and the best of people, were similarly under the curse of the king, helpless to escape. Yet knowing their helplessness, helped them. And the king had sent the sinless one, Lord Newadam, to take that curse upon himself.

Some even came to believe that Lord Newadam, became the curse. But then indeed, some even believed that he became sin, said Evangelist. "But say rather that he became the sin offering, cut off and accursed, for us", he said. "Many more are the hidden

mysteries, that can only be unveiled within the Land of the Prince, to pilgrims of the king, who have eyes to see."

And Acharin bowed his head at the goodness of the king, and wept over his own waywardness. He had forsaken the heavenly for the earthly; Princess Sarah, for Slave Hagar. And in spite of Evangelist's good words, he feared that the king would not welcome him in, even into his earthly dominions. Should he not return to Destruction, as a warning to others? But Evangelist assured him that to err is human, and that the king could forgive. Yet he must warn himself to walk aright, lest he fail to enter through the Gate.

The journey back to the path to the path of paths, was walked uneasily. For he stealthily walked as one who, having accidentally trespassed, seeks to return to the highway without being seen—for guilt as a stealthy guide, guides them back. But at last he returned to the path to the Gate, breathed easily once more, and soon arrived at the Gate. Behold, over the Gate was written, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Chapter 5

The Gate

Then I saw in my dream, that Acharin knocked, indeed, more than once or twice, until the gatekeeper, who introduced himself as Goodwill, came forth. “Please let me in, sir. My name is Acharin, and I am but a poor sinner from Destruction, by fate deserving no less. Yet I elect Mount Zion, on which is built foursquare, Celestial City.”

Goodwill, opened the Gate, and as soon as Acharin made to enter, pulled him quickly through the threshold. “The entry begins your new life, the life of a pilgrim passing through. Enemies of the prince are posted close by, deadly archers, often led by Be’elzebub their lord and captain. In the Land Debateable behind you, they have a strong castle. From there they seek to slay only they who will enter through this gate. Some have dallied at this point of decision, and been slain where you stood, so I helped you not to dally. Here I bestow upon you the blessed name *Christian*. Cling you to it, from this gate where you have betaken yourself to be a pilgrim, to that gate where all our names shall be changed. And now I shall instruct you about your journey through the prince’s dominions.”

Being invited, Christian sat down, removed his boots, and took refreshments. "Already, sir," said he, "I begin to reap the benefits of my perils. Alas, that none of my neighbours saw their danger, as I saw mine. Indeed, my wife and children saw me as I fled, and cried after me to return, as did certain others of my city. Obstinate, and Pliable, even ran after me, to take me back, yet Pliable then walked with me on way to this gatehouse."

"Then why is he not with you? Does he yet follow?" asked Goodwill kindly.

"No indeed, alas. We both were walking hopefully here, until we came upon the Slough of Despond—for we had wandered off the path. He held me guilty that we fell within. Then, finding it easier to climb out, he returned thence to Destruction."

Goodwill sighed: "Many, not truly persuaded, have turned back before reaching the Gate. Thus they have missed the glories of the prince, which far outweigh the perils of the way." Christian confessed that he too, had been too pliable when he should have been obstinate, willingly deceived by the arguments of Mr. Worldly Wiseman. "Oh, did he light upon you? What! You went, I guess, after the easy way, though it is not the true way. And how far did you go?"

"I went longingly, until climbing I feared that I could climb no more, nor retrace my steps, yet I had still fallen short of Mr. Legality", answered Christian. Goodwill commented that that very hill had been the death of many seekers. "Indeed," said Christian, "I owe much to Evangelist, who in the king's mercy met me in my hour of need, and by whose grace you have welcomed me in."

Goodwill assured Christian that to the prince, all sinners were treated as equal sinners, and the Gate would not forbid any who welcomed the prince and sought the king. And as to the right way to Celestial City, why, that was generally easy to see, though perhaps not so easy to follow. For while it was the straightest and narrowest path, wider and twisted ways, turning to the left or to the right, might seem more appealing—and do not the feet follow the eye?

Asked about his burden, Goodwill explained that while Christian had heaven's welcome, the assurance of welcome did not always come to pilgrims, especially if they saw not the cross. Some caught that sight at the Gate; some saw that sight further along the path; some entered the City without having seen the sight. "But," added Goodwill, "seen or unseen, none can enter but by the cross—and even the prince's dominions have been bought by his blood. So be content, though you carry your burden for now. But know that the prince carried a far heavier burden, far further, for you. Indeed here I add to your burden three things, which add no sorrow. And I mark your head with that which beautifies. You shall understand, when the time is ripe."

Then Christian put on his boots, took up an ash cut walking stick that was offered unto him, and began his journey within the prince's dominions. For his journey, Goodwill had told him to seek help along the way—for no pilgrim should seek to walk without the helps that the prince had set in place for them. He had told him moreover, to visit the house of Interpreter, but a short distance hence.

Chapter 6

Mr. Interpreter

Then I saw in my dream, that he soon arrived at that house, introducing himself as one from Destruction, seeking Mount Zion, and advised by the gatekeeper to lodge with Mr. Interpreter. He was welcomed in by the master of the house himself, who led him to a special room with several doors. “Open one”, said the master, upon which Christian did do so.

Inside was a picture of an olive-skinned man, whose eyes were lifted up to heaven, whose hands held the Book in one hand and a pen in the other, and whose lips had, written on them, the law of truth. He stood looking away from the world, wore a royal crown, and yet seemed to plead with all mankind. Christian enquired after this picture, and was told that it captured one in ten ten thousand, if that, who had in purity yet without wife, born many royal children. And who, as a mother, could again know birth pangs once they were born, and nurse them as a mother. Sinners he could help, since he looked first to heaven, held close to his heart the king’s book, and only spoke truly from it. He despised worldly allure, was ennobled by heaven, and pleaded with sinners to be saved, and with

saints to be sanctified. The glory of heaven awaited him. This man was appointed by the king to be the greatest teacher of pilgrims—bar the assistance of the agent of grace—and a sure and steady guide. "Heed the words of his writings, lest you be ensnared, for none have written better of grace and truth", said Interpreter.

Next, he opened unto Christian another door. In that room lay thick upon the wooden floor, the dust of innumerable years. Thereupon a man entered with a broom to sweep away the dust. Yet the sweeping almost choked Christian to death, because of the dust swept airwards. Thereupon a woman entered, who sprinkled the room with water. Then the dust was mopped from the room.

Having enquired as to the meaning of this parable, Christian was told that a sinful heart is a heart of sin's dust, needing not to be stirred by human effort, nay, not even by the law of the king, but sprinkled first by the water of the grace of the king. Indeed, the righteous law of the king, unable in itself to arrest human sin, spurs it on, by demanding a righteousness more than man can deliver, and pronounces death for disobedience. So that death, empowered by the law, becomes the sting of sin. Yet grace is more powerful still, and can wash away that which would choke. But does the choking not warn that we need the sprinkling of grace? And only a cleaned heart will be as a royal throne for the king of Zion.

Next he opened unto Christian another door. In that room sat a young boy named Passion, and his younger sister named Patience. But Passion lacked patience

within. Christian asked why they waited, and was told that their father had planned for them blessings beyond their wildest dreams, but that his children had to wait. Passion arose, however, and said "I must have, and I must have now." Soon some evil young men tempted them both, placing earthly treasure at their feet, yet only to keep if they would join their number. Readily did Passion do so, scorning his sister for staying under their father's roof. But soon, Passion was in rags, living rough along the highways and byways, lost to his father and to his sister, though they loved him still.

And is this not how impatience for the king's best, can lead to rack and ruin? Some who are worldly seek sudden fame, fame that can last only in this mortal life. "A bird in the hand, is worth two in the bush", they boasted. Yet what if the bird in their hand is evil, and the flock of birds in the bush are good? And even two good birds may become more than two in the hand. Alas, carnal minds seek not truly the true treasure of godliness, so fall ever lower, and mere earthly loves come to naught in the end. Lo, they may perchance become diabolical, which is yet far worse.

Patience too was impassioned, but hers was rather for obedient life under her father's roof, wherein she was content. She was destined to become the Lady of the House, the inheritor of her father. And moreover, she remained under his blessings, while under his roof. Hers would be the true glory, not the vain glory she scorned as not worth the candle. Said Interpreter: "Fix your mind therefore, not on what is seen, but on what is

unseen, for worldly treasure is fleeting, but the heavenly treasure to come, is everlasting."

Next, he opened unto Christian another door. In that room a cheerful fire burnt next to a strong wall, and one faceless as a deep shadow on whom it cast no light, stood ever casting water upon it. And yet the fire burned ever hotter and brighter. Christian enquired after this strange fire, and was told that the king's fire was set in the hearts of his pilgrims. The one who sought on one side of the wall, to extinguish it, was the enemy. But unseen on the other side of the wall, stood the prince's agent, continually adding oil to the fire, both to continue, and to strengthen, the holy fire. Yet the secret oil is not always seen by those whose hearts have the fire.

Chapter 7

Enchantment and Disenchantment

Then I saw in my dream, that Interpreter led him to a pleasant place. A palace was there there, beautiful to behold. Christian stood enchanted, but looked curiously at the people who were dressed in golden clothing, who walked upon the balcony.

Interpreter happily led him to the gateway, where stood many people who wished to enter but feared to do so. A man sat at the gateway to the courtyard, to write down the names of all who would enter the palace. There stood between him and the palace, four heavily armed men, set to challenge all comers.

Of the many that were called, one alone dared to venture the door. And once his name had been written down, he donned a helmet, drew a sword, and straightway ran towards the evil knights. They swiftly set upon him with deadly force, but though sore wounded, he fought his way to the door. From within, there was heard the cry: “Come in, come in; everlasting glory, you shall win.” On entering, his blood-stained clothing was replaced by clean clothing, which gleamed like gold and healed his wounds. And he was highly praised.

Christian enquired not of this, for he said: "Even as we might suffer much to enter the dominions of the prince, so in walking his path to Celestial City, we might have to suffer yet more."

Interpreter then took him into a very dark room, where there sat a sad old man in an iron-wrought cage, sighing deeply. "Talk to him", said Interpreter. And Christian did so, asking the man who he was.

"I now am what I once was not," responded the old man, "for once, having professed the faith, I was keen to grow. Yet shallow in submission was I and soon gave up, once the going got tough. Now I wither alone, unable to free myself from my cage. Having left the ship of salvation, the captain will not permit me to re-embark. I confess my own failings. I looked for an easy and enjoyable life, without conflict or clamour; hearing and heeding the Book seemed pointless. Alas, I grieved the heavenly dove, and he has flown from me; I invited the crow of hell, and he has come to roost. The Book sternly says that none who crucify the crucified one, shall be spared: I have spurned the king's son; insulted the king's agent; the king's anger encages me in iron."

Aside, Christian asked whether the old man had any hope of grace. "Alas," said Interpreter, "he has no hope of grace. Natheless, grace has hope for him. So there is hope that he will turn and be restored as a pilgrim. But he can hold no hope, while he believes in no hope. As to the cage, why, it was wrought by the futility of his own mind, not by the king's anger—for this man in his anger misjudges his judge.

"To be sure his first faith—and some would deny him that—proved faithless. But as to the Book, it proclaims

captivity to such as he, only for as long as they choose to continue in their folly, insulting the prince in public. Yet affronted grace is not fickle, and stands ever ready to raise the fallen, if they truly repent. However, grace raises this warning, that they who violate the covenant with their lord who needs them not, do but exile and doom themselves. In folly and despair, it is this man who denies himself repentance, yet blames the denial on the king."

Christian betold himself, the more careful to be, to keep the cross ever before him, lest he enslaved should be. Interpreter then took him into a room, wherein a man, bestirring himself from his slumbers, began to quake with fear. And it was given to Christian to see what dream the sleeper had dreamt.

Lo, in the darkness of night, he had seen a revelation that, dressed for battle, the prince would return to the Land Debateable, to uproot all evil, putting down his foes with a heavy hand. He heard mighty thunders that pierced the ears. He saw flashes of fire that pierced the eyes. And there were peals of trumpets, as of a mighty army—and flames were in their swords.

A loud voice shouted out: "Let the dead awake, and come forth to be judged!" And the dead arose and came forth, some with love, some with hatred—but none could hide, no not even in the grave. Above them, someone who shone through the clouds of heaven with downward eye, commanded that mankind be divided between they who were of hell, and they who were of heaven. As a shepherd divides goats from sheep, so was the flock divided. As a farmer divides weeds from wheat, so was the harvest divided. For at last drew near the final parting of the ways.

The bottomless pit split open at the feet of the sleeper as the earth violently quaked. From it fumed forth the nauseous stench of hell. He himself was not among those who arose to meet, greet, and return with, the descending lord. And he feared, lest he therefore would forever live his life within the pit of perdition. For long he had kept the Slain Lamb at bay; would forever the Warrior Lamb now keep *him* at bay?

In shame he sought to hide himself, afraid to be seen by the eye in the sky. Yet he feared more not to be seen by that eye that downward looked. Could the eye of wrath, not be unto him an eye of love? The sleeper's conscience smote him sore on every side. Whereupon he awoke, all atremble, and spoke to himself thus: "Having beheld the fate of the damned, why should I linger longer in the path of death, when I could now be welcomed into the way of life? Why should I still live under the eye of wrath, which is rightly offended by my unholy ways, when my own conscience too does witness dire against me?"

Preparing himself to depart, Christian said that the dream spoke to him of hope and of fear. Interpreter bade him king's-blessings, and counselled him to always be guided by the unseen helper, the agent of the prince, and not to walk in fallen ways. Thus, he would please his prince, and would reap a rich reward in this life and beyond. And Christian thanked him, for the time spent aside had shown him things both precious and profitable; things both desirable and dreadful; things to guide well his journey.

Chapter 8

Blessed Assurance

Then I saw in my dream, that though he was still weighed down by his burden of sin, the road on which Christian now plodded, was a blest way. And yet the prince of that land was not happy for pilgrims to carry such loads, for he himself had carried them for them. Thus he had planted a cross atop a steep climb, such that pilgrims would be more mindful of their burdens, and fix their minds on the great burden bearer. The name of that steep climb was, Mount Golgotha.

And at the bottom of that slope, and to their right, lay an empty tomb, cut out of the hillside. So it was, that as Christian ascended the slope, his soul cried out for release, and his eyes beheld the cross. And at last his burden slipped from his shoulders, and he bore it no more. Thereupon it rolled down that slope, and into the empty tomb, and was seen no more.

Then at the foot of that old rugged cross, Christian bent the knee with a gladsome and gay heart. He saw at last, that having come through the Gate, he was no longer a slave to sin, but had been freed unto freedom. And that freedom had been bought at a princely price, indeed by a royal death. And from the fountains in his

eyes, flowed sweet waters as twin streams trickling down his face, one named Heart's Ease, and one named Content.

Now, as he stood gazing through his tears, three shining ones came unto him. And they greeted him, bidding him grace and peace. From his back had also fallen a small bundle, which lay at his feet. This they undid for him, handing unto him its secret treasures bestowed at the Gate.

"Behold," said the first, "herein is a parchment of ancient days, yet ever new. And on it is written these words: Your sins are forgiven."

"Behold," said the second, "herein is a robe of ancient days, yet ever new. Take from your back your old coat, and put on this garment of righteousness, for it is a gift from your prince."

"Behold," said the third, "herein is a scroll of ancient days, yet new. It bears the seal of the prince, confirming your citizenship within his dominions. Doubt not that you walk in his way, and never cast aside this assurance, until you come unto Celestial Gate. Whereupon hand it with honour unto the gate-wardens, for once within, you will need the scroll no more."

He was given too a special key to conceal, which might, they said, come in useful on the journey. Moreover, they held a special mirror to his eyes, and darkly he beheld that the mark upon his head, was the royal seal of the prince. And at last he understood that, though he had come in through the cross—for thus was the Gate shaped—it was only now, as he fixed his eyes on it, that he held its assurance in his hands. It was as if

he had secretly been given a golden penny, which had only now dropped and been picked up. Jubilating in wondrous joviality, thrice he leaped high for joy, and broke forth in singing.

"Oh long I walked, laden with all my sin; Nor could the world, remove the grief within. Then through the Gate, I came unto this place; And knew within, the wonder and the grace. The rope me bound, but here from me did break; And in this land, my load me did forsake. The cross, the grave, and resurrection free; For he, the prince, was put to shame for me."

Soon, still singing merrily, he espied at the base of the hill, three men asleeping, as if in a sodden stupor, bound in folly, fearless of fear. Their names were Simple, Sloth, and Presumption. Now for their safety, Christian tried to awake them by shakes, and saying aloud to them, "Sirs, are you not as those who sleep atop a crow's nest upon the raging waves? Arise, lest you sleep forever cold upon the sea's bed. Shake off the shackles of your slumbers, lest your enemy bind you in your sleep. Yea, let me help you so."

They bestirred themselves, but arose not. Said Simple: "I see no danger." Said Sloth: "I need more sleep." Said Presumption: "Every barrel must stand upon its own bottom." Each returning to his own slumber, Christian therefore left them to their folly, and continued his journey, though sorrowful for their shame. But what more could he do? They heeded not his advice, nor his proffer of help. Surely, no matter what, some cannot be helped, because they will not be helped.

Chapter 9

Formalism and Hypocrisy

Then I saw in my dream, that as he meditated thus, he espied two gentlemen tumbling over the perimeter wall to his left, from the Land Debateable. Quickly they approached him on the king's highway, with courteous bows introducing themselves as Mr. Formalist, and Mr. Hypocrisy. They had come from the Town of Vainglory, seeking commendation from Celestial City.

Said Christian unto them: "Sirs, I think I have heard that free citizenship of this country, is given to all who will but pass through the Gate. And that all others entering this land, will be deemed to be thieves, robbers, and such like. I humbly urge that you hasten quickly east, and beg Goodwill to grant you assurance of entry, and pilgrim clothing for the journey."

"Nay," they replied, "for that journey is needlessly excessive for such as we, who coming from the south lived nearer to the City. Why, if any of us have a mind to journey west, we often climb over the wall. And we are justified. For our people have done so for well over a thousand years, and custom becomes right. Moreover,

what does it matter how we got here, so long as we did get here? Why judge yourself holier than we, though you came through the Gate, and we over the Wall? When we enter, the City will be enriched and will rejoice to receive such as us."

Christian, however, replied that as things stood, they simply did not belong on the king's highway, nor walked by the grace of the prince of the dominions. "I fear much that having come in by yourselves, and without his directions, you shall go out by yourselves, and without his mercy."

"Fellow," said they, "if that be your tone, then mind to your own business, for we do not much like it. Wethinks we walk this path with as much confidence, yea with more, than can you. For we are as well able, yea better able, to obey the rules of this road. As to your pilgrim's robe, though we doubt not that it fits you fine, we have fashioned our own, according to our own tastes. As to your disapproval of them, why, to be frank we doubt not that your own were lent you by some kindly neighbours, taking pity on your old rags."

Confessed Christian unto them: "Yea, old rags once I wore, and slander them as you will. But slander not what I now wear, for it came not from neighbours, but from the prince of these dominions. Yea, truly he in grace took pity on me, clothed then in unrighteousness, and invited me into his land. But you entered without invitation, but by whim.

"It is not by keeping the laws of the highway, that walking along it is justified, but by coming through the Gate, which he has built at high cost. Having come in aright, he has given me confidence, even a scroll of welcome,

and a mark written upon my forehead with ink that few can see. Yet it is his seal of approval. Such I doubt not that you lack, for they are gifts given, and given only, I think, at the Gate."

And they stood in amaze, mocked his for his pertinacity, and lingered a little behind him, disdaining his companionship. But soon they reached Hill Difficulty, and at its feet there flowed a spring, refreshing to the soul. Three ways there were. The king's highway went straight up the hill. Another path skirted around to the left, and another to the right.

Having refreshed himself at the spring, Christian had scorned the climb, and continued on the king's way, onwards and upwards, singing to himself: "The hill be high, so fearful and unkind; Though heart might ache, grace mine I will not mind. For this my lord, has set for test of me; Now upward climb, I will more holy be. Hard though it is, the king's way we should go; Than walk in ease, when ease's end is woe."

Mr. Formalist and Mr. Hypocrisy, watching as he staggered up seeking to run, scoffed his folly. For, they said, obedience is fine, but when hard and needless, is but a fool's errand. Therefore, being wise in their own conceits, they looked to their own feet, and departed the king's highway, just for a little while. For, they said, more sense to skirt yonder hill, and then to rejoin the way beyond, at their convenience.

Unbeknown to them, the road to one side, was named Danger, and that to the other side, was named Death. Dissenting as to which road was the better, one took one, and the other took the other. Danger led the one into a great tree beshadowed wood, where lions were

wont to lurk. Death led the other through a wide and spacious field, yet then between dark and dismal mountains, where rocks were wont to fall. Indeed, Christian saw neither ever again. Shall they who wrongly begin, rightly end?

Christian soon discovered that he had not paced himself up the slope, trying to run too quickly where he should have at most run slowly. For it is important to run at consistent effort. More than once did he stumble, and at times had to climb with hands and knees, so steep was the path in places. So welcome was the sight, midway up, wherein was set a sweet shelter and seat for the weary, that they should find rest for their souls, and ease for their soles.

There he gratefully sat down, gazing once more upon the scroll of assurance, given to him at the Gate, and marvelling awhile at the wondrous workmanship of the garments, which marked him out as a pilgrim. Then giving way to the barm of the warm breeze, slumbered he, who should had journeyed. And unbeknown to him, the precious scroll fell from his sleeping hands.

Soon in his dream came the words: "Be neither a lazybones nor a slug, but learn from the ants, and be wise. Lest otherwise you be as a deer in a snare, or as a captive bird in the hand of a fowler." He awoke with a start, and immediately continued his climb, seeking to make up for time lost, and soon came to the top of the hill.

Chapter 10

A Tale of Two Lions

Then I saw in my dream, that there upon the top, he met two men. They came quickly towards him, even Timorous and Mistrust. Extending his arms, Christian caused them to stop. “Hold hard, good sirs, for you go the wrong way”, he said. Breathless, Timorous panted that they had been going to the city of Zion, Celestial City, and had earlier climbed Hill Difficulty. But, said he, afterwards the road increased in danger, until in fear they turned back. And Mistrust said that two lions, whether asleep or awake, lay on the way ahead, and would surely savage them if espied. Thereupon they warned him to be wise, and to return east with them, where their journey had begun.

Christian then addressed them thus: “Good sirs, you give me cause to fear the journey. But if I safely journey to my old home, I return but to Destruction. And that is unsafe, by reason of fire and brimstone. If I unsafely journey to Celestial City, I journey through uncertain danger to certain safety. So, should I choose unsafe means to safe end, or safe means to unsafe end? The one is fear of death, but the other is death. For my part I will go on. And if I perish, I perish, but my soul will be in the

keeping of the prince, who I believe will bear it unto everlasting life."

Mistrust and Timorous, still imagining lions upon their track, hastened east, but Christian went on his way. Yet, being somewhat timorous and mistrusting, he sought to draw assurance from his scroll. But lo, it was gone! At a loss, a while he stopped and prayed. Then, it came to his mind the way-stop arbour, where he had slept in folly.

Repenting thereof, he quickly returned in bitter anguish, to seek that which was lost. And he looked to the left and to the right, as he descended. He told himself time and time again, that those who belong to the day, should sleep but at night, and be sober. Bitterly he berated himself for his folly, for he who should have gone on by now, had had to go back, only to climb back yet again.

He returned at last to the shelter. It had been built but for short repose. And by its quiet waters, which ran gently down, he sat down and wept long. Then weeping gave way to seeking, and behold he saw the scroll lying just under the seat on which he sat. Quickly he snatched it up with great joy, stowing it safely upon his person, nigh unto his heart. And his joy at its finding, greatly exceeded his sorrow at its losing, even as the sun does outshine the moon. And raising his arms, he cried with a loud voice unto the four winds: "Rejoice with me, for I have regained assurance I had lost." Thereupon he gave thanks to his guide, always unseen, always with.

Quickly then did he retrace his way upwards. And with a spring in his step, he made his way again to the top. And the sun did slowly sink in the sky. *I paid dear for my earlier folly, but gain a lesson rich for my journey*. It then crossed his mind that there were lions ahead. What if he encountered them in the night? Quickly down the path he went. Then, as tiredness came down, he lifted up his eyes, and lo, there stood ahead and aside of the road, a stately palace. Palace Beautiful, was its name, and lights were lit within its many rooms.

He increased his pace, for the sooner he was ensconced within, the sooner would he be safe from the perils of the night. Yet the air itself was warm, as if Spring itself were enthroned in this hidden valley. Yet high up it was, sat between high hills, and Autumn was beyond.

Thereupon suddenly he descried two gigantic lions, terrors by night and by day. Their eyes glowed evilly in the light of the hunter's moon, and they stood between him and the house. He saw for sure, that Mistrust and Timorous had been driven back by real, not fancied, fears. And for all his early reasoning, he was now sore tempted to follow them.

But at that point the gatekeeper, named Watchful, espied him, and called to him: "Fear not, for though they will snarl, snap, and strain, these lions are chained. They are set to test the resolve of those who would go on. Many there have been who at first flee back, only to gather boldness, and to beard the lions. But if you are bold to approach, stay on the centre of the path, and they will be in nowise able to tear you." And Christian, summoning his courage, did as Watchful bade him. He put faith before fear, so was not put to shame.

Chapter 11

Discretion and Piety

Then I saw in my dream, that he clapped his hands in cheer, and addressed Watchful, the porter: "Good sir, whose is this house, and may I have lodging this night?" Watchful replied that the prince had built the palace for pilgrims, and enquired as to where Christian was headed from and to. "From Destruction City, good sir, and to Celestial City I am bound." Asked why he was journeying at night, he replied that he had earlier slept when he should have walked, and now walked when he would otherwise have slept, for he wished to redeem the time. For that loss of his assurance had compounded his dalliance.

Watchman, taking him to the door, rang the bell. For it was for the young ladies of the palace to decide who would be welcomed within. A sweet and serious lady named Discretion, slowly opened the door. "My lady," said the porter with a bow, "here is a man of truth, travelling from Destruction to Mount Zion, who seeks lodgings for the night. I leave him now with you to judge as you think best, as is our custom." With that, he bowed low and withdrew to his watch.

Then she asked Christian why he had become a pilgrim, and he told her. Then she asked him how his journey had fared, and he told her. Then she asked him his name, and he told her. He added that he longed to lodge there because he was weary, but much more because it was built by his prince for pilgrims. She lovingly smiled at one who loved her lord, and called for her sisters, Prudence, Piety, and Charity. They quickly came to meet him, then happily beckoned him to abide within as kith and kin, for were they not all children of the king?

He bowed unto them, his sisters, and followed them into the house, wherein was set a little food and drink, until supper be ready. And once they had sat down, Piety thought it godly to converse in fruitful discourse. "Pray, good Christian, be so good as to tell us what has happened on your pilgrimage."

"Happily", replied Christian. "Firstly, as to why I began the journey, I became troubled by the noise of Destruction, and I feared its collapse into the pits below. My own sins, once hidden from my sight, took visible shape and weight, and became a heavy burden to me. As to the path upon which I fled, that was told unto me by Evangelist, who beheld my sorrow, and in grace directed me to the Wicket Gate. Through danger, trap and snare, I was helped, till at the Gate I took the helping hand of Goodwill. Ah, the grace that bid me boldly enter, and signed me with the mark of the cross upon my mind.

"Through the Gate, I came unto the house of Interpreter, who showed me many things. Three especial: that unseen the divine prince stokes up the holy fire within, in spite of the diabolical prince; that deeply in sin, we can by

disbelief be damned; and that the prince seeks to save all from the fiery abyss.

"As to what else I beheld in Interpreter's house, I saw that the valiant can overcome the enemy, and win eternal glory: was the courtyard fight not a similitude for the struggle of a pilgrim's life, of fighting the good fight to gain the heavenly goal? Indeed, it put it in mind that I must venture on and fight my own fights, looking ahead to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."

"And what," asked Piety, "did you encounter once you left that house?" With eyes moist, he recalled unto her his vision of the wondrous cross, on which the prince of glory had died. And how enraptured, the burden he had put upon his back, had fallen off, and how three gifts put upon his back at the Gate, were put into his hands by three shining ones. The first—a testimony of pardon. The second—a robe of royal life. The third—a scroll of confidence, but not in himself. "And are such marvels the full story of your travel?" she asked.

"Nay, for in the light of day I saw three sleepers, Simple, Sloth, and Presumption, shackled in their sleep and in danger—though they knew it not. Release them I could not, for they would not. Then there was Formalist and Hypocrisy, who had clambered over the wall of salvation, and feigned to go to Celestial City as celebrities. Their stars soon faded, for they would make their own way forward, rather than seeking permission and help.

"And my heart bled for Timorous and Mistrust, who fearing lions repented of the Pilgrim Way. My own heart misgave me, but for Watchful, your porter at your gate. He was a help in time of trouble." From Piety, he reassured himself that godliness was the best policy.

Chapter 12

Prudence and Charity

Then I saw in my dream, that Prudence then thought it helpful to converse. “Christian, does your mind dwell on where you dwelt?”

“Sadly,” said he, “and never without much shame and detestation. For otherwise, I could have returned in body, as well as in mind, at any time. But now I seek the heavenly country in mind and in body. As for old ways and deeds, some still afflict my mind, against my deeper will and to my grief. As controlling a ship upon stormy waves, is harder than with a ship upon calm waves, so is controlling myself upon the old ways. As to whether I have days of calm, indeed yes, and such I account golden hours, where the sun shines, even through the storm clouds which would overwhelm my barque.”

Again, Prudence probed for reflection: “Can you recall how your inner enemies are vanquished?” Christian replied that fixing his mind on the cross, or on his new nature, or about the scroll of assurance, or about his destination, gained him such victories. As to why his destination was so important to him, why, he replied, he hoped to see he whom he loved for having died for him, and to be free from the presence of sin, which sickened him still, and to live deathless in the undying

lands for, forever there he would have such company as did always rejoice as they sang of he who is holy beyond the holiest. From Prudence, he fixed his mind on how to overcome.

Then Charity[1] thought it loving to converse. "Are you a married man, sir, and have you a family?"

"Married, yes," he said, "to a good woman named Achiana, and together we have four small children, Matthew, Samuel, Joseph, & James. Though we named them by the Book, their names were not written within, nor was that of my wife. Nor could I bring them on this journey, which only the willing may take. Oh may someday their names be confirmed by the king." With tears welling up within his eyes, he told how willingly he would have walked the walk with them. Had he sought to persuade them? Why, yes. But they were like unto the sons-in-law of Lot, in that they did but scoff at his words and at the turmoil of his soul. He had, moreover, prayed earnestly for them, too, for he loved them all dearly.

They had been simply too attached to their world, to leave it behind, and been blind to the dangers that loomed over it. Achiana was all too comfortably settled. Their sons, being in their reckless years, wished to grow within the familiar, rather than to be replanted in the unfamiliar. Moreover, their mother convinced them that his words were vain.

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[1] Today the word 'charity' means helping people at a social level by goods and money. In Bunyan's days, it was a fading term to mean *godly* love.

Gently, Charity asked him whether his own vain life might not also have led them to value his words as but vain. Sadly, Christian acknowledged the truth of her words. Yet, he added, while his past bad life had spoken louder than his new good words, his words to forsake vanity, had not been vain. But through his past, his words though not vain, were words spoken in vain.

Having seen that their doubts were reasonable, he had therefore sought at the least, not to put them off the journey which he could not put them onto. Indeed, they soon saw that he had changed, which both puzzled and disconcerted them. Puzzled, in that some things which they deemed innocent, he had begun to refrain from. And disconcerted, because they feared that they too, if taking to his conviction, must likewise forgo. For he seemed unto them, to be too taken up with not displeasing the king, and with not doing wrong to others.

"Alas," said Charity softly, "because Cain enjoyed the wickedness of this world, even so did he resent his brother Abel, because Abel enjoyed the righteousness of heaven. Your wife and sons, offended by you and upset by your disquiet over sin, but show their deeper offence over righteousness, and their inner disquiet lest they be in the wrong. So take comfort, you who did well to counsel them to flee from death and unto life. For it may be that your words have lodged like seed within their hearts, that in due season may spring forth to a harvest." From Charity, he gained hope for those he loved.

Chapter 13

Palace Views

Then I saw in my dream, that supper was served. Christian was ready to feast. The lavish table was furnished with prime cuts of choice meat, and fine vintage wine. And their table talk was of the king of heaven, and of the prince of the hill, and of his agent who walked unseen alongside pilgrims.

The prince had proved himself a fell warrior, for at the cost of his own life, he had in single combat, defeated he who had the power of death. And so that the prince should lead his people, the king restored unto him his life, bestowing upon him human immortality with him—that gift was the king's to bestow as he pleased.

Nor had the prince been rash, but had knowingly fought to the death. For he knew that that was needed, if he were to save his people from death itself: his blood, for their blood. So great was his love, that beyond his death, many thanks and much praise was given him, by those who had followed him, and had become the first pilgrims to travel his dominions.

Once they knew him better, they understood how he had laid aside his royal glory to become a sinless warrior, in order to deliver the slaves of sin. It was as if

a wealthy man had ceded all his wealth to those who were poor, or had worn their rags that they might wear his robes. The prince, having no need of them who needed him, exalted all who willingly walked the Pilgrim Way. He wished to share the Royal Hills of Zion, with whosoever sought his father the king.

Much more was spoken of, until sleepy eyes reminded them of their need for rest—they were not shining ones of undimmed eyes! Committing their dreams to the king, they each retired to their rooms. The next day, having slept like a log, Christian awoke singing this song: "Sweet is this place, so full of loving care; And what a prince, he is beyond compare. Once rebel I, now I stand forgiven; And now I dwell, right next-door to heaven."

Before proceeding onwards, he was shown around the palace. In one study room, they showed him the lineage of the prince, that indeed he was the one-of-a-kind son of the Ancient of Days, who has no beginning and no end, for he is beyond time itself. Time indeed, it was said, is with the Ancient One, though he is known to man by a name of time.

Christian asked how it was, that his son could also timeless be. He was told that one wise man, named Siwel, had likened him as image to imager, namely that an image begins immediately the imager images. And if the imager be beyond time, and eternally images the image, then the image shall eternal be. Indeed he has been called, the eternal generation, the eternal son.

Yet though the how be but guessed at, the is is the important thing to grasp. Moreover, in the study room

were recorded the names of all who had entered his service, and daily more names were added to that great multitude, who served like an army of twelve by twelve by one millennium. Many now dwelt immortal in the king's palace.

And not just they, but many had followed the king before the days of the prince-warrior. They had rooms no less rich. Of those invited into the Palace of Zion, some had wrought great and mighty works against the enemy, and suffered great and mighty things for righteousness. Evil kingdoms had been put down, roaring lions had been stilled; many had fought and died, and fought and won, in the name of the prince.

Ledgers recorded the acts of the king and his son. Many were these acts, across lands not listed elsewhere. They showed how grace welcomed many who had been at enmity against the king—or his son. Moreover scrolls there were which spoke of the future plans of the king, and of his son. Plans that shall come to pass in the fullness of time. Plans which their enemies dread. Plans, in which pilgrims take heart. He spent the whole day reading the records. Yet as he went to his room for the night, he heard a voice say: "And the end is not yet."

Chapter 14

Weapons of War

Then I saw in my dream, that that night he dreamed of a city named Mansoul,[2] and how it was conquered by one named Immanuel. And yet he dreamed how under the new flag, traces of darkness still lurked within, needing to be dislodged. Truly, he thought, spiritual warfare is within, as well as without. He woke to the sweet singing of birds, unheard for many a month.

After he had broken his fast the first time, the ladies took him to a majestic armoury, stretching cavernous beyond mortal sight, its roof supported by many mighty pillars. Within were spiritual weapons, enough to furnish a countless army. Whereupon he was well armed. For, they warned him, on his journey he would face enemies, spiritual, not carnal.

Thus they gave unto him a belt, a breastplate, firm footwear, a shield, a helmet, and a sword. To each item, was ascribed a thought: truth, righteousness,

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[2] John Bunyan wrote, *The Holy War*, about Mansoul. PS: Christian's weapons weren't for physical (eg Vanity Fair) fights, but reached into psychological (eg Giant Despair) and spiritual fights (eg Apollyon).

peace, faith, salvation, and last but not least, the Book. "Yet you are not sufficient for the fight," they added, "unless you bear in mind the captain of your salvation, and walk prayerfully with your guide, for he knows the way you should take, and will direct you in battle.

"Moreover, such soldiery avails not against flesh and blood enemies, but avails much against evil spirits of all kinds that surround, whether they are called rulers, or authorities, or cosmic powers of this present darkness. Many are their guises. Many are their pretentions. Moreover, mark well that you go not forth to defeat them, but to defend against their attacks."

They showed him however, trophies of triumphs against flesh and blood, such as the rod of Moses, which he had used both to open the Sea of Reeds to cross, and to close it to engulf his mortal enemies who had sought his life. And the trumpets of rams horns, and clay jars with burning torches within, which Gideon had used to stampede the enemy sent to destroy many. And the donkey's jawbone, abandoned at Ramathlehi, which had been used by Samson as a sword, when he left in piles the bodies of his enemies.

"But when is mortal warfare permitted?" asked Christian. They replied that at times it may be right for defence, but of old it had been justified even for the dispossessing of an evil confederacy of peoples, of whom the land was sick. Yet the king's people were then to live within its borders, making treaties where possible with the lands of the surrounding nations, but only defending their land when needful. He whom they named Yahweh, would support them, when they honoured his name.

After Christian had broken his fast the second time, he was urged to wait yet one more day. Now to the west trees alone hemmed their valley, and on that third day they took him atop of the palace to show unto him the Delectable Mountains. These mountains lay close to Celestial City. They were gloriously strewn with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains, beautiful to behold. That land was called Immanuel's Land, and was open to all pilgrims. And the City gates were just beyond.

Then, his heart full of joy, he would tarry no longer in that fair place, but arrayed now in bright armour, would go forth upon the road that led to Mount Zion. Watchful, the porter, told him that the other day, a pilgrim named Faithful, whose name had been Meshubah, had gone by along the road. By accident, he had killed a man in Destruction, and now walked with fear.

"Meshubah!" cried Christian, "Why, he is from my town! I think his new name to be far better." Watchful replied that Faithful might soon be caught up with, and Christian, leaving his blessing with the porter, left him, and hastened on his way.

The four sisters walked swiftly with him a while on the downward path, reminding him of the sum of their conversations, and warning him to watch his feet. It had been difficult uphill; was it dangerous downhill, he asked? "Yes," said Prudence, "for it is a hard matter for any pilgrim to go down into the Valley of Humiliation, as you are doing now, without stumbling. That is why we walk with you to the base." Indeed, though well guided by them, he suffered still a slip or two.

Chapter 15

Apollyon Tempts to Return

Then I saw in my dream, that when Christian was gotten to the bottom of the hill, the sisters gave unto him a loaf of bread, a bottle of sweet wine, blessed him, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

But soon, feeling all alone in the Valley of Humiliation, poor Christian was hard put to it. For soon he encountered a foul fiend, a foe named Apollyon who strode fast over fief and field to fealty claim. In fear of his approach, Christian wondered whether to face or to flee. To flee would expose his back, which lacked protection against arrows. To face was safest withal, though the sight of his enemy was terrifying to behold.

As he stood fast, the monster slowed itself before him. It was a hideous strength, clothed in pride with armour like unto the scales of fish, having wide scaly wings like unto a dragon, and huge clawed feet like unto a bear. And out of its belly came flames of fire, and puffs of smoke. And its mouth was like unto the jaw of a lion. When it was come up to Christian, it beheld him with a disdainful countenance. Its voice was like unto the roar of a giant, and its breath was foul.

"Stay! Whence and whither, O man?" he demanded.

"I come from the evil City of Destruction, and am going to the holy City of Zion", replied Christian.

"As I guessed," growled the great beast, "trying to escape from your lawful lord and master—for Destruction and the Land Debateable, are mine. It would be just to slay you here and now, as a turncoat. Yet I will forgive your sin, if you will return to serve me again."

Respectfully yet firmly, Christian replied: "Truly, I was born within your kingdom which is in fact if not in law, but serving you is ill, and pays but death. Now of age, I have put off childishness, as have others, and seek better employ and outcome."

Apollyon laughed aloud. "No prince is like to blithely lose his subjects, even ingrates such as you. Why, your disloyalty does you no credit, for did you not disloyally marry against my will? For I forbid pledges of lifelong loyalty between my subjects, unless they be pledged in fraud, and then foresworn. So, you revile me as a hard taskmaster, who pays you ill? I shall strike a bargain with you: return to your rightful servitude, and your burden shall be easy, and your reward will be rich from the bounty of the world."

"To return would be to betray my new lord, to whom I have sworn fealty", protested Christian.

"Fool!" roared Apollyon. "You have turned from a bad to a worse. Many pilgrims have seen the error of their ways and repented, returning to me, having given their new king the slip. Do likewise, and all shall still be well."

"Nay," said Christian, "though to you I was born, to him I have been born anew. In my right mind I have pledged my word to the king, whose son gave himself for me. To

forsake him now, would render me a traitor and knave, fit only for the gibbet."

"Why fool," spat Apollyon, "betrayal is in your blood. Having already betrayed me, why jib at betraying again? But for my part, I forgive your betrayal, if you will but return to me."

"My loyalty to you," said Christian, "was but in my nonage, and thus of small worth. My prince does not prize such loyalty, nor rebuke its breach. Indeed he forgave my heart disloyalty to the king over princes. Moreover, he did lovingly welcome me into the Pilgrim Way, which he himself did lay down at cost of his life. You, O mighty Apollyon, I perceive to be a destroyer and corrupter. And I say to you, that to him, you and your dominion are as dark to light, as evil to good, as hideousness to beauty. Therefore, tempt me no more, and get you gone, for I shall seek my king."

"But in such seeking there is death aplenty, and worse", rumbled Apollyon. "Few pilgrims come not to a cruel end, since I spare not mine enemies who transgress against me. Moreover, never does he leave his palace to help pilgrims in distress, but provides them with poor armour, that they must fight alone. But here am I, ever ready to deliver from his hands, those who have fallen foul as his unlawful prey. I will fight him for your soul."

A reply quickly came into Christian's mind, that indeed the prince did not deliver those who could, with his help, deliver themselves. But that sometimes, that was that their devotion might be both tested and purified. Or else, that sometimes that they might enter quickly into his everlasting kingdom, full ripe as a fruit

awaiting to be plucked from mortal branch. "He is loyal and is my reward", said he.

Apollyon sneered at his words. "You have already been disloyal to him. Can you still expect his pay? For you wandered from the path to him, and were fain to sink in the Slough of Despond. Then you sought other help, to remove your burden. You played the slug where you should but have rested, losing his scroll. Almost, did you turn tail from the lions! And your heart does yearn for flattery for all you say and do."

Truly, said Christian, his old master knew his weaknesses, which cut him like a knife, and the half had not yet been told. "But the prince I serve is merciful, ever willing to forgive those who are penitent. Indeed, by his grace I will the steadier be."

"Cast not so oft the name of your prince, to me," snarled Apollyon in rage, "for he and I are mortal enemies. I hate him. I hate his laws. I hate his people. And I shall slay you, unless you yield."

"Nay, it is yourself that should beware," cried Christian, "for I stand in the king's highway, a pilgrim of the prince, and in his name I defy you to do your worst."

Then Apollyon arose with a mighty roar, and straddled over the whole width of the way, and swore that it was Christian who would die, not himself. And he fired a flaming arrow at Christian, whose shield deftly deflected it harmlessly away.

Then Christian drew his sword in his other hand. Flaming arrows were fired again and again by Apollyon, as thick and as fast as hail. Soon Christian, grazed and wounded on hands and feet and head, gave

way a little, and Apollyon followed up the attack amain. Yet Christian gave way no more, and fought.

And thus they fought furiously the better part of the day. Yet Christian the weaker grew, for loss of blood, and sighs and groans did burst from his heart. Then Apollyon threw aside his sword, and grappled Christian to the ground, whose sword flew forth from his hand in the fall. "I have you now!"

And yet, as in his glee the enemy crowed with carelessness, he saw not Christian lay hand to sword. And with a lunge, that two-edged sword stabbed deep into the side of Apollyon. And Christian yelled aloud: "Gloat not over me, my enemy. Though I fall, I shall rise." And mighty Apollyon staggered back, for even an immortal can feel a mortal blow. "In all my troubles, I am more than a conqueror through him who loves me", shouted Christian, arising in joy.

In alarm of such resurgence, Apollyon spread out his dragon wings, and fled away as fast as he could fly. Christian was left the clear winner of that battle dire. Spurning the temptation to glory in his own prowess, with humble heart he sang these staves: "Be'elzebub, the captain of ill woe; Sought me to slay, by sending me this foe. Regaled in scales, of might and fierce rage; Angel of hell, who me did sore engage. Not Michael's sword, but one more sharp had I; By sword divine, my enemy did fly. Therefore to king, let me give lasting praise; And love and thank, his holy name always."

Chapter 16

The Valley of the Shadow

Then I saw in my dream, that a slender hand as if of samite, came unto him, bearing a leaf from the tree of life. When Christian applied the leaf to his wounds, they were immediately healed. Then, his mind being set on the prince, he ate some bread and drank some wine, refreshing his soul. Then, his sword drawn for further battle, he went on his way.

Soon, he saw ahead a darksome valley, named by some, the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It was a barren and broken gulch, a treacherous stretch of dryness—save for some bubble of foetid water—and of deep darkness, which not even a miscreant would gladly cross. Yet through it the path lay, and returning from it, two men approached him in haste. It may be that they were distant descendants of illsayers Nahbi and Palti, for surely they were descended in mind. However, their names are now forgotten.

Now unto Christian, they spoke words of warning against the path: "Go back, go back!" they cried, "for as we, so too must you go back, if you prize your sanity and salubrity. What? You ask what is the matter? Man, we are pilgrims, like you, and we have been that way, unlike you.

Why, it is fearful to begin, and it gets but worse. Had we not turned back, we would have perished, and warned you not. Go back."

Then Christian asked them, what it was that they had met and seen. They replied that they had cautiously peeked into the valley, and they espied it to be a home of jackals, and as dark as death. Some pilgrims sat therein, fast bound in misery and the fell irons of Fenris, their cries the cries of unutterable misery. "Doleful creatures of many kinds, seemed to dwell therein: hobgoblins, satyrs, and dragons from the deepest pit, doubt not. We heard the screech of owls, the howls of wolves, and the clamour of creatures unseen. Above were stretched the dismal wings of woe, and the clouds of confusion. The valley is every whit dreadful. Therefore flee."

Christian assured them, that be that as it may, through it his path to heaven lay. "For you, maybe, but not for us", said they. And off they scurried. On reaching the valley, he saw on the right hand, a very deep ditch. In it, it seemed to him, that if the blind did lead the blind, both would miserably perish. He saw also, on the left hand, a very dangerous quag, into which if pilgrims fell, they could find no ledge for their feet. Had not good King David, while walking the Sinai Way—well back in the days of the king's old dominions—once fallen into a similar quag? And there he would have perished, save that in grace, King Yahweh had plucked him out, as if from a fire.

And venturing between these two ditches, he found the path to be exceeding narrow. Deep darkness lay left and right; deep gloom above. At times, he veered

to the right, then veered to the left, as if a drunken man. Great carefulness was needed, not to fall into opposite errors. Still, slowly he pressed forward, from danger into danger, not knowing how things would go. Ahead he saw a sickly glow, from which ever and anon belched out flame and smoke, as from the Gates of Hell. And if he fell through those gates, would he lost eternally be? His fear said Yes; his scroll said No.

Noises of terror he loudly heard. And it came to him that it was useless pitting sword against shadows. Sheathing his sword therefore, he partook to prayer: "O high king of heaven, guide me and deliver, I beseech, my soul." Thus ever watching and praying, inch by inch he edged his way forward, though frightful flames oft lept out to greet him, and ruinous voices abounded to his right and to his left. And it seemed that for many miles, threats and damnations were in the voices, unto which he knew he must not heed.

At one point did he stop, and was sore tempted to return. For he thought that he heard foul fiends, approaching on the path ahead. But he was reminded of how he had vanquished many a danger. And might not the danger of going aback, exceed the danger of going ahead? He elected, therefore, to go forward, and to face the fiends, who now seemed much closer.

When they seemed almost upon him, he let out a loud cry: "I will go forward in the strength of the king of heaven. I will speak of his justice above all." Then he heard but footsteps scurrying away, as if they feared to face he who would fearless be.

Chapter 17

Shadow Within Without

Then I saw in my dream, that a more subtle trick was tried against him. For in the confusion of the way, he had even become unsure of his own voice, as the Shadow had crept into his heart. Thus it was that a cunning fiend, slipping unseen from the Gates of Hell that were alongside of him, whispered behind him in his own voice, many blasphemies.

Christian was fair astonished, that such thoughts should come from his own mind, against him who loved him so much. Yea, against he, who had chosen to endure the cross, despising its shame, that pilgrims from hell, to heaven might go. Yet Christian seemed unable not to revile his lot, nor but to blaspheme his prince. He therefore stood aghast in sore amaze. But he neither stopped his ears, nor questioned from whence the voice did come.

As he ploughed forward, he therefore enquired within himself, whether such a blasphemer as he, would welcome at heaven's door be. Then another voice, as one walking ahead, said: "Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I need fear no evil, for my guide walks with me, his rod and staff protect me."

Then Christian was glad. For firstly, he realised that fellow pilgrims had walked the woeful way before him. Secondly, he realised that though his own ears and eyes be dimmed, that undimmed, the king himself could always lead the way, even if unheard and unseen. Thirdly, he hoped that by following the voice, he could catch up to good company. Indeed he called out to he who was ahead. But he who was ahead, heard not his voice, and thought himself alone but for the king and his enemies, and the faster did walk on. For now there was a hint of light ahead.

At last, Christian too came out of the gloom of the valley, and it was as if he who had darkened the day into night, had now turned the deep shadow of death, into the lush sunshine of morning. Turning back to face his fears, he saw, as with better sight, the dangers which had lain to his right and to his left, and the narrowness of the solid path.

He saw the hobgoblins, satyrs, and dragons from the deepest pit, set there to scare away pilgrims from the journey. But they were mere spirits of malice, unable to face the light of day. Christian now saw them with the eyes of he who uncovers mysteries hidden in deep darkness, and who sheds light on the deepest gloom.

And yet, though the sky was bright, a stretch of the valley still lay ahead of him. Unbeknown to him, the dangers ahead exceeded the dangers behind. For it was full to busting with snares, traps, gins, and nets here. And full of pits, pitfalls, deep holes, and slopes there. Had he walked in the night, it would have been a

miracle had he survived. But it was the will of the prince that none be tested beyond endurance.

As he walked ever nearer to the valley's end, he came across old blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of pilgrims who had gone before. A large cave entrance stood nearby, wherein in olden times had lived Giant Pagan. He had been turned out by Giant Pope: soundly defeated, but not dead. As for Giant Pope, once a father of pilgrims, he had long withered with age and attack, and had become a little crazed, hating pilgrims not of his loins. Moreover, he was a little stiff in his joints. Now when ill-favoured pilgrims walked by, the most he could do to their discomfiture, was to leer mischievously at them, boast with magniloquence over them, and bite his nails to disconcert them. Indeed, when he sat not at that entrance, Giant Maul sometimes sat there, younger nephew to Giant Pope, lambasting with half-baked reasoning.

As Christian passed, Giant Pope gloomily proclaimed him protester, not pilgrim: "You lot will never mend, till more of you be burned." And indeed, many a poor pilgrim had he tied up and burnt, in his younger days. But Christian silently, smilingly, and safely, went by. And he sang in blessed relief: "Oh wide-eyed in joy, wherein I now rest; Kept safe through dangers, many on my quest. And now I do sing, who by grace am free; I kiss the kind hand, that delivered me. Demons, deceptions, hell darkness, and sin; Surrounded my soul, hell's fear was within. Traps, snares and deep pits, and strong nets did lie; About my poor feet, so that I should die. In feeble body, soul and mind cast down; But my prince I praise, and with thanks do crown."

Chapter 18

From Adam, to Shame

Then I saw in my dream, that as Christian went on his way, he came upon a vantage point. From there, he saw Faithful hastening ahead. He shouted to him to wait for him to catch up, but Faithful, fearing that the Avenger of Blood[3] was hot on his trail, refused to stay. Christian was now concerned, fearing that Meshubah, as he once was, had by mischance taken human life, before his new life, and was pursued. He therefore quickly ran forward, and then having overtaken him, being somewhat proud of his pace, he did stumble and fall. Shamefaced was he, when Faithful helped him to his proud feet.

And then they walked along together, as old friends do, reminiscing on old times, and their journey on the king's highway, which had led both to so pleasant a path. Faithful, now feeling safer for having a sturdy friend with sword and shield, slowed his pace. "I too

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3 Among less State-controlled peoples, random homicides were largely for victim families to avenge, their delegates being Avengers of Blood. Not all homicide is murder: Nb.35:27. Rough justice was largely balanced by such as sanctuary laws, to protect innocent killers.

had words with Evangelist, who persuaded you just before he persuaded me, else we might have set off together", said Faithful. "Indeed, Destruction was astir after you left, fearing that the fires of heaven might indeed burn down the city around our ears. Yet methinks that they feared with little fear. And some voices mocked you as a simpleton, as easily scared as a rabbit. But it came to me that what you had seen, you had seen true. So I resolved to escape while I might."

Then Christian turned the talk to the present way. Faithful replied that he had avoided the Slough of Despond, and arrived at the Wicket Gate. And that without much mishap, to boot. Though he had briefly met a woman named Wanton, who had sought to ensnare him, yet he had escaped her nets. Christian reflected on how young Joseph of old, meeting that self-same woman, had barely escaped with his life. "Oh, but what a flattering tongue she had," sighed Faithful, "and she promised me that to please her, would fully please myself."

"Therein she lied," said Christian, "for neither your conscience, nor your lord, would have been pleased."

"Yes, that I clearly see", replied Faithful. "Naught but my lower self of sense and of pride, would have been pleased. I thank heaven that I escaped her bewitchments, for the mouth of a wanton woman is as a deep pit, swallowing many fools with whom the king is ill pleased. Yet though I did not consent to her lust, nor defile myself thereby, I did not fully escape her in thought, though fully in deed. But seeing that her ways were the ways of hell, I made a swift covenant with my eyes, never to look with lust upon women. And I turned away, though she cried after me."

"And no doubt," reflected Christian, "even godly women of old were threatened by desire by lawless men, to be their trophies. And godly Susanna was threatened death by two untrue elders of Israel. Resistance is not easy. But did you meet with no other assault as you came?"

"Yes, though it seemed not ill at the time. For a very elderly man stood at the base of Hill Difficulty. He asked me what traveller I was, and whither bound. 'A pilgrim,' said I, 'seeking Celestial City'. Thereupon he introduced himself, answering me thus.

"My name is Adam First, and I live in the nearby town of Deceit. My jobs are my joy, and if you will work for me, a happy life will you have, and after me, inherit this old world. My house is an old established place, well provided for by the countless dainties that come from the world, and my servants I account as my very own children. You would love to meet my three daughters, Desiring Oldways, Lustful Eyes, and Pride Life. Young Jacob indeed had four wives, but you would be more than happy with my three daughters as your wives. You would simply have to live under my roof, while I live."

Faithful admitted that he had been very tempted to settle down in old familiar ways, with fair young maidens. But as he looked hard at Mr. First, he knew that his new lord had been unhappy with this man and his old works. He knew therefore that he must turn away from this old man, fix his mind on heavenly things, and walk the new path. "It then dawned on me, that his flattery aside, had he got me into his house, I would have been but a captive slave. Then he turned on me, promised that I would suffer for casting him off, and I hastened on my way.

"It had seemed that he followed me not, but once I reached the halfway shelter, a most miserable man named Moses, came swiftly after me in wrath." Christian interjected that there he had lost his scroll, but Faithful simply carried on. "He gave me a beefy buffet to my head, and I lay as a dead man. As I revived a little, he told me sternly that I deserved no less—and it is true—since my heart held an unlawful yearning for the old ways. And he threatened to do away with my sinfulness, by doing away with me.

"Just then, a man stepped in, staying his hand. Scars were on his feet and on his wrists. And he bade me arise, and with his help to surmount Hill Difficulty, as one redeemed. Moreover, he told me neither to judge myself, nor to beat up myself, nor be beaten up, by laws just but not for me. I should, he told me, have shown Moses my scroll, for I was under grace, not under law, and indeed, that Moses meant well but being old was sometimes forgetful that his task had ended."

"Truly by grace were you saved," said Christian, "and not by your own deeds. But why did you not enter the palace which lies just over the hill?" Faithful told that he was tempted, but for the lions—even if asleep—that lay by its gates. And moreover, the hour was nigh unto noon, and he wished to distance himself further from the avenger, who he feared followed.

"I see", said Christian. "The porter did say that you passed by. But alas, much joy could they who dwell there have imparted unto you, had you lodged there awhile, and aid they would have offered you for your journey. And how fared you in the Valley of Humiliation?"

Said Faithful: "I met with Discontent. 'Head back with me,' said he, 'for this sorry place is bereft of all dignity.' Indeed, he said that to walk the walk would offend the goodmen Pride, Arrogance, Self-conceit, Worldly-glory, and many more, who sneered in contempt to see their own flesh and blood, foolishly flounder in the valley.

"I informed him that those named, were no longer kith nor kin of mine, for I had disowned them when I became a pilgrim. Yea, we had both sides disowned the other. Moreover, the valley which he named Undignified, I named rather Humility, holy if walked humbly. For well do I now see that a haughty spirit leads to defeat, but humility leads to honour."

Chapter 19

Shame is Slow to Depart

Then I saw in my dream, that Faithful named another. "I met also with a man named Shame", said he. "Yet maybe he should be called, Shameless Shame, for bold-faced he would in nowise acknowledge his own shame. The words 'shame on you' he pontified, but never the words, 'shame on me'. He despised theism of any kind, especially that which was revealed directly from heaven. He despised conscience, as for the weak-minded. He would be free from morals, to live his life as he chose, mindless of the grief he caused others. Else he would look a fool, and that to him was sin.

"He argued that since few of the rich and powerful walked the Pilgrim Way, then that way was without real value. And who but a fool would venture all on a whim, for nobody knows what? Peasants alone were pilgrims, like ignorant swine, like to drown themselves in the sea, regarding neither science nor sweet reason. Shameful, said he, to whine and wail under a sermon, then to bring it home with sighing and sniffling. Shameful too, said he, to seek a neighbour's forgiveness for petty offence, or to offer restitution for wrongs done unto them. Things I called shameful, he called by fancy names, and paraded them in pride as if a rainbow of virtue, rather than a fog

of vice. To disregard the proud, and to regard the humble, he called shame."

Asked about his response to this man, Faithful replied thus: "At first I was dumbstruck, but I was reminded that some are always making themselves look good in their own eyes, but that what most people think is important, is worth nothing as far as the king is concerned. Moreover, I saw that though Shame speaks of mankind well enough, he spoke not of the king, nor of the Book, nor of the king's judgement on us. Did he think that the king, rather than we, will be in the dock? For surely the king, being eternal, is wisest, and indeed the fount of all true wisdom. Therefore, it is surely unwise to prefer our wisdom to his folly, for his folly, is such there be, must exceed our wisdom.

"Therefore, since the king has enthroned his religion, he most truly has enthroned conscience and compassion as granddaughters of his voice, howbeit muffled and prone to error. And I saw that they whom Shame called fools, if they be fools for the king, were then wiser than the wisest of they who revile the king's ways. Yea indeed, they who are poor at his behest, are surely richer than the richest of they who revile the king's way.

"These words I spoke unto Shame, and bade him depart. For how could I walk in friendship with both Shame and with my prince? For Shame is at enmity with the prince. Nor would I walk in friendship with Shame, and in enmity with my prince. But Shame was a bold villain, and loath to be shaken off. Close by he tagged along, ever and anon he muttered that my religion suffered from many infirmities. Which, since its pilgrims are infirm, is true. Of its virtues, he uttered not a word, as if he neither knew, nor cared to know. Finally, he gave up and left."

Happy and free, Faithful sang aloud: "Trials we meet, the more in life withal; If we do walk, observant to the call. Legion they be, that would our souls enmesh; and come and come, and come again afresh. That now or next, our anchor we shall shift; and to hell's reef, sadly we should then drift. Please help pilgrims, O king to well behave; be vigilant, and in the storms be brave."

Christian rejoiced that Faithful had withstood such villainy valiantly, and Shame's boast in colourless pride. Such amazing effrontery, that he who should wear shame, instead cast it! Why should good religion wear shame, when that garment fitted the irreligious far better? Alas, Shame was a fool who promoted foolery by calling his false wisdom, wise, and calling true wisdom, folly. Christian agreed that the king of glory was always needed to fight off shame. And he was pleased that notwithstanding the fog of Shame, Faithful had otherwise walked in sunshine, even through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Chapter 20

Faithful is Open to Good Talk

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian for his part, briefly recalled his fight with Apollyon, in which he had expected to die. Yet the king had heard his cry, and delivered him from the evil one—how else had his sword come back to his hand, save by an unseen hand? And in the Shadow, likewise he had held himself to be a dead man. That was, until at last day had broken, and the sun had risen. Now he went on in some peace and content. And so they spoke of their journeys, until soon they noticed a man named Talkative, walking ahead of them. He was tall, and seemed at a distance, to look better than he did up close.

"Ho, friend, whither away?" asked Faithful. "Are you headed for Zion?" He added, when Talkative answered, Yea, "Good, then I hope that we may enjoy your company." Talkative replied that he much looked forward to that, and Faithful suggested that they talk about things spiritual, which most enrich.

"Excellent," said Talkative, "for I would love to talk about such things with you or with anybody else, for that matter. Sadly, I meet so few who will stop to talk about

such goodness, and would rather waste chatter in idle things of little worth, such as the weather."

"Lamentable indeed", agreed Faithful. "For what is so worthy to speak of, than the king of Zion?"

"I warm to you already," said Talkative, "for you speak with such conviction. What talk indeed, is so pleasant and profitable? What things so pleasant, to they who delight in wonder? We could well speak of the mystery of things, and how they came to be. Or from the Book, if we wished, we could find record of signs, of wonders, and of miracles, so delightfully and sweetly penned."

"True," said Faithful, "only let us talk to be profited withal, in our most holy faith."

"Indeed," said Talkative, "it is as I said. For it is to our profit to gain knowledge, whether it be about the vanity of earthly things, or about the virtue of heavenly things. On the latter, in particular we should learn the necessity of the new birth, the insufficiency of our works, the need of the prince's righteousness, what it means to repent, to believe, to pray, to suffer, and the like. Furthermore, to learn what are the great and exceeding promises and consolations of the gospel, to our comfort. Additionally, by this we learn how to refute false opinions, to vindicate the truth, and also to instruct the ignorant."

Faithful's heart was warmed by Talkative speaking such truth. He encouraged Talkative to talk on: "The lack of such knowledge is the reason why so few understand their need of faith, and of the king's grace, if eternal life they would have. Instead, in ignorance they seek merely to obey his laws, by which none can obtain the prince's favour."

Faithful interrupted, to ask whether Talkative believed that such knowledge came merely through human speech, or whether it must be sown into human hearts by heaven. "I know full well," replied Talkative, "that we can receive nothing that is eternal, save it be given to us by the eternal. I could cite many texts from the Book, to confirm this." Happy with their agreement, Faithful invited Talkative to choose a topic to discuss as they walked.

Chapter 21

All Talk and No Vision

Then I saw in my dream, that Talkative replied that he was happy to talk about just any old thing, so long as he talked. Whether about heaven or earth, things moral or evangelical, sacred or secular, the past or the future, places near or far, essentials or nonessentials. As long as they were—enriching. At such indifference, Faithful began to doubt Talkative's spiritual vision, and he had a quiet word with Christian. "He seems to be a brave and worthy pilgrim, does he not?"

Christian smiled: "That man—I wondered when you would begin to suspect—has a tongue which will bewitch people by the bucketload, if they let it. Why, he can talk the hind legs off a horse—but can he bravely walk the Pilgrim Way?

"Indeed I know him, better than he knows himself. His name is Talkative, his father is Say-well, and he lives in Prating Row in Destruction, though not all who live in that city know him. I have heard of his prattlings too, well enough. But notwithstanding his smooth tongue, he is but a sorry fellow, though you have thought him smart. And yet that is why it is so sorry. For in his case, smart mind smart heart does lack. He is like a painting which

looks fine at a distance, but looks flawed when looked at closely."

Christian smiled knowingly, and Faithful asked whether his smile meant that he spoke in jest. "The king forbid," said Christian, "that I should jester or juror falsely be. Truly, I will add to what I have said, that Talkative will happily talk in any company, whether he is sober or sodden. And indeed, the more ale in a tavern, the more he will prattle. For true religion has no true place in his heart. He will speak unto each company, as it would have him to speak, whether as sinner or as saint. His religion is all talk, and no more."

"Alas!" said Faithful, "for I have taken a deceiver into my heart."

"Alas, indeed, that he be such a one. Of such the Book says, 'Do as they teach, but not as they do, for they do not practice what they preach.' The true kingdom is not based on mere words, but is based on true power, to which good words do testify.

"Talkative speaks of repentance, faith, prayer, spiritual birth, and the like, but knows them not in power, only in precept. I have met him and his family, and seen how they live. Though he likes to wear a mitre, yet his house is as empty of true religion, as the white of an egg is of taste. The name of the king is blasphemed throughout the world, by such as him.

"Oh, he can seem to be a saint abroad, but can be a demon at home. And then his poor family suffers. He can be a churl and a bully, to those under his sway. Better dealings will they have, who fall in with a Turk, than with Talkative, it is said. He will, if he can, defraud and beguile, and teaches his children to do likewise. And if

they show signs of conscience—what he labels foolish timorousness—he calls them fools and blockheads, and puts them down in diverse ways.

"I fear that he has, by his wicked life, been the ruin of many an innocent, and—unless the king steps in—will be the ruin of many more." Other things he also added.

Faithful, though disappointed, had to admit that he took Christian's word on such. For he knew him to be a truth teller, not one who maligned, and so would have known Talkative well enough to judge aright. Christian added that had he just met him, he too would likely enough have been taken in by his glib tongue, even to defending him against accusations from the base. For a lot of evil said about the godly, by the godless, is false. But alas, the charges against Talkative were well based, and many a godly person had affirmed them by their own knowledge, deeming Talkative an embarrassment.

Said Faithful: "I now see that saying, and doing, are two different things. Hereafter I shall better discriminate."

Said Christian: "Indeed, they are as different as soul and body. A body without soul, is but a dead carcass. Likewise, talk without power, is but a dead carcass. As wise James did say, the heart and soul of true religion turns us in devotion to the king, and in service to the needy, and to our own holiness. Of this threefold cord, Talkative is blind. Hearing might sow the seed only in the mind. Talkative can show some good that is in his mind, but it is neither in his heart nor in his life, as those who know him know. Likewise, the fruit of a tree shows what kind is the tree, and not all trees are oaks of righteousness. At the Great Assize, many good talkers

will be judged as having been bad livers. I fear that Talkative will fail the test on that day."

"Yea," said Faithful, "and it comes to my mind, that under Sinai, camels, though they seem to chew the cud but are not cloven-footed, and pigs, though they are cloven-footed but do not chew the cud, were both deemed symbolically unclean. Of land beasts, only having the appearance of both attributes, both cloven-footed and chewing the cud, symbolised the normal. Is it not likewise, that Talkative is unclean, having one attribute, but not the other, the talk without the walk?"

"Perhaps that is the true gospel sense of those laws", said Christian. "I add another: that the inspired Paul judged even good pilgrims to fail the test, if they had wondrous manifestations of the unseen guide, but had not his love. Though they might sing like angels, their highest melodies would be but as blunt chunks of brass, clashing with cheerful cymbals. Might it be that for Paul, both attributes should go together, if we are to make a joyful noise unto our king?"

Faithful confessed that he hadn't at first warmed to Talkative, then did, and now chilled to him. But once you would be rid of it, how will a burr brush off? Christian suggested a way forward, in short, that they make Talkative sick of them—unless the king turned his heart. "Friend Faithful, begin again your discourse with him, and let it be on the power of true religion. Oh, he will happily talk, but make the talk unpleasant to him. For press him bluntly on whether this theme is established within his heart, his home, and his daily life."

Chapter 22

Talkative is Silenced

Then I saw in my dream, that Faithful rejoined Talkative on the walk. He had been, to speak bluntly, somewhat vexed at having to walk a while without talk. Unto him, Faithful suggested that they talk about how the king's grace can be seen in human hearts. Though far from chuffed, Talkative conceding it to be a good question, proceeded to give a brief overview. "Firstly, when it is within, it does cause the heart to cry out against sin. Secondly…"

"Nay, hold a moment, and consider your words. Does it not first cause the heart to abhor sin?" asked Faithful.

"Good sir," replied Talkative, "surely we say the same?"

"Indeed no", said Faithful. "Some cry out against a sin because it is not on their side, but they do not abhor it of itself. Whereas only the godly will abhor the sin, even if it is on their side. I have heard many from the pulpit revile sin, who are happy enough with it within their own heart, house, and life. She who sought to inflict Joseph, cried out loud enough against sin, as if she was pious. Yet that very sin was welcome within her unholy heart. Some rebuke sin, as a mother first rebukes her daughters, then falls to hugging and kissing them."

"You seek to trap me, I see", said Talkative.

"Nay, only to correct you", said Faithful. "But what were you looking to say next, as to what shows the king's grace to be welcomed within?" Talkative replied that it was a mastery of the gospel mysteries. Again, Faithful denied that that was proof positive. "Methinks that that should have been the first sign. But even so, it is not proof. For cannot a pagan or a priest well understand the truth, without welcoming it? Did not the prince, having asked if his followers understood his commands, say that his blessing was on the doing of them, rather than in the knowing of them?

"Howbeit they stand together. For knowledge itself is a blessing, and a people were once commended for the blessing of zeal though they lacked the blessing of knowledge. And the prince would have blessèd zeal to be guided by blessèd knowledge, even as unknowing glove guided by knowing hand. But does not even Be'elzebub, sworn enemy of the king, know that he is king, yet fear him with limitless hate? So, servants should know their master's will, and then should do it with good heart.

"And though deep knowledge of the gospel should indeed be in the heart, it can merely be in the mind, and in itself is no sure proof of saving grace within. Indeed, to know can please talkers and boasters, but to know and to love and to do, pleases the king."

"Again you have sought entrapment, not enrichment", muttered Talkative. "And no," he replied to Faithful who urged forward the talk, "I will not say more on this subject. And yes, you may if you really must."

Thus begrudgingly given leave, Faithful said that the king's grace was surely within the heart when the

sinner sees, and from their inmost being, rejects their sin, especially that of rebellion against the king. And such a penitent, if offered the king's highway, will almost surely heartily welcome it and walk therein, by command of the prince. So too, according to their commitment, will be evident true joy, peace, and heartfelt commitment to holiness, wherein they seek to know and to please their king the more. Even so, pilgrims might entertain doubt, knowing that the heart can deceive, but constancy might make them the more certain.

"To others, their conversion might be seen in various ways. For they should give testimony by lip—as like to a soldier who rallies around their flag—and by a holy life. They should moreover abhor sin and their own old nature. And before others, they should suppress their old nature, and promote their new nature. And I say not simply by lip—as a mere talker might do—but by life, both in secret, and in seeing. Thus they will show true obedience, faith, love, and the power of the Book.

"If you have aught to say further on this, pray do so. If not, with your permission I will put to you a second question", said Faithful. Talkative, feeling rather silent and sullen, declared that he did not feel free to add aught, but that he was free to listen, if Faithful really must blether on.

Then Faithful asked Talkative, bluntly and unexpectedly, if Talkative himself was such a man. Had Talkative experienced the first part of this description, the inner witness of a new life? And with regards to the outward show, did he show the outward fruits of new life?

"Or is your religion only in your words and in pretentions, rather than in holy deeds and truth? And if you choose to answer me, please say nothing which the king would not witness to, and only what your conscience affirms. For it is the king's praise which counts, not simply our own. Moreover, if your neighbours see figs from you, why claim to be an apple tree; or if apples, why claim to be a fig tree?"

Then Talkative began to blush, but quickly recovering himself, he rallied: "You are not my judge, nor will I allow you to judge me, and I shall refuse to judge myself. You speak confidently of inner and outer witnesses, and claim to speak for the king. Goodness me, your simple arrogance astounds me, and deeply disturbs me, in due portions. But pray tell, why did you turn against me?"

"Let me tell you the truth," said Faithful, "for I would not tell you otherwise. I turned against your folly for your own good, and for the good of others. For soon your talk disturbed me as shallow, and soon I saw why. Then I feared for you, and wished you to examine yourself, to judge yourself as to whether you are in the true faith. For the testimony against you, is that your religion is all talk, without heavenly testimony, and that your lifestyle belies your profession of true faith.

"It is said of you, that by sinful living you defame the Pilgrim Way, which you profess to uphold—though *you* are not upheld by it. Moreover, it is said that some now prefer the darkness, because *you* profess to be of the light. Moreover, that your world is of the tavern, and of covetousness, and ungodliness, and unclean language, and untruthful words, and vanity of friends, and more such besides. As it is said that a whore is a shame to all women, so it is said that you are a shame to all pilgrims.

"Therefore, if this judgement be true, you should disavow your sin, and avow the Pilgrim Way—at least for the sake of yourself. Or else disavow the Pilgrim Way, and avow your sin—at least for the sake of others."

"Well," hissed Talkative, "since you are so quick to judge me by what others say about me, I dismiss you as a peevish or melancholy man, not fit for my company. And so adieu."

Chapter 23

A Prophet in the Wilderness

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian spoke: "It is as I said, that godly words offend ungodly ears, and that he was more like to reject your company, than to reform his life. Let him go, for his loss is his own. Your words may in time affect him well, but his words on our journey would sadden our souls."

Said Faithful: "Yet I am pleased to have given him a chance to welcome the truth. Whether that chance waxes or wanes, at least I have played my part. Likewise, a lookout has played theirs, who warns their town that enemies approach."

And Christian replied: "Too few, nowadays, would have spoken so boldly and plainly to him, giving him fair chance. Many reject true religion, because many like Talkative, who claim to speak for the truth of it, speak lies, and their lives do show it. And they puzzle many, for wolves can wear clerical cloth, as if truly confirmed to speak for the way. Yet they do but grime the faith, and grieve the faithful. Oh, that more like you, would challenge such infidels, either to be pilgrims, or else to find the company of saints too hot for their liking."

Then they merrily continued their journey with proper talk. And now they walked through a wilderness. And

looking back, but not with wistful eye, they beheld a man quickly approaching. And with great joy did they behold him, for he was none other than Evangelist. And they stopped and awaited him.

"Greetings!" said he, shaking hands in welcome.

"It warms our hearts to see you again," said Christian, "for we both have much to thank you for."

"Indeed yes," said Faithful, "a thousand welcomes are not enough for the pleasure of your company." Evangelist then enquired as to how they were, and how they had fared. And they put him wise on both counts. "I am well pleased," said he, "not that you have had difficulties—though that is good—but that having had them, you have come out the winners, weak though you be, and rejoicing in your weakness.

"I am also pleased on my behalf, for what I planted, I do now rejoice in. You yourselves have, from the words I sowed, reaped a harvest of life, and do rejoice. Sower and reaper rejoice together!

"But do not rest on your laurels. In this world, runners compete, for only one will win the laurel wreath. Yet in that world to enter, all may win the Imperishable Laurel, but only if you run the race as those striving to win. Each day do you travel from this to that which is to come, in sure hope. Discover whether you are one of the athletes who deserve victory, or belong to the number of those who travel about the world and are everywhere defeated.

"And be mindful, for you are not yet safe from arrow, from club, from gun-shot from the enemy. Be prepared for further attack to come by fair means or by foul, as you head towards the finishing line. Beware of the hostile world, and look to the inner world of your own hearts,

where that which opposes the new nature, still stirs. And always trust in your heavenly guide."

Christian thanked him for his words, and hoped that he would continue the journey with them. Moreover, having divined that he had somewhat of the prophetic gift, he, followed by Faithful, asked Evangelist as to whether he had any seeing into their futures, and words to help them cope.

"My sons in the faith, and brother pilgrims, in general it is as written, that the way to Mount Zion passes through many trials and tribulations, though the danger for each may differ. And in many towns and cities, imprisonment and affliction lurk, though not for all. You have already discovered something of this to be true, and you shall discover more hereafter.

"Behold, soon you will leave this wilderness, and I must leave you. Take heed, for beyond is a troublesome town, and I foresee that there you will be badly beset by bullies, who will seek to slay you. For your part, hold fast to the true testimony, which one of you at least must seal with his blood. It is your part to be faithful into death; it is your king's part to reward you with the crown of life.

"But if one survives by the king's will, let him not think that he has the better part, even if his fellow has died in great pain. For he who has died will have gone the swifter to Celestial City, and will be free from the many more miseries of the road.

"But when you come unto this town, and do see that it is as I have said, then remember my words. And quit yourselves like true pilgrims of the prince, who laid down his life for yours. Look unto him who is your lord, and unto the king of lords."

Chapter 24

Truth Enangered by Vanity

Then I saw in my dream, that the wilderness opened up to a merry and gay old town, named Vanity. That town held a fair, named Vanity Fair. It was not a yearly event, mind you, but an event a year long, and held each year. Indeed, each night and each day, it traded. It was a never-ending fair. Its name was based on the town name, but also on its trade, because it only traded in vanity. As to its home-grown vanities, they were once nicknamed by an ancient teacher of wisdom, named Qoheleth. He called them, vanities of Vanity.

The town and its fair, had stood at least for millennia—some said but five. Some said ten thousand times five, for authorities yet debated as to when it began. But all agreed that it was begun by Be'elzebub, Apollyon, and Legion, along with many of their lackeys, so as to entrap poor pilgrims, and to keep a great many people happy with trinkets. And so it was, that in ancient times, even Pilgrims of Sinai could at times be enmeshed. And so it was, that when the new Pilgrim Way was established, the whole town was dismantled, nail by nail, and built anew in its new location, to entice and entrap the Pilgrims of the Prince.

A worthless currency was used there. But that at least was fair, for the goods bought were but worthless. And yet some spent real money on the same goods. Some even sold their birthright for pots of message. Yet to the unaided eye, the goods looked to be of worth, goods both material and immaterial, such as houses, lands, trades, places, honours, promotions, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, and pleasures. On offer were delights of all sorts, such as whores, bawds, carles, carlines, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, and what not.

Bustling around were jugglers, cheats, gamblers, players, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues of every kind. Moreover, there were commonly thefts, murders, adulteries, perjuries, and scarlet stains bespattering the pavements. It was jolly. As with lesser fairs, there were stretches and sections to represent the whole world, places full of evil and vain boasting.

Such as one small corner of the town, which wherein were, British Street, French Connection, Italian Quarter, Spanish Lane, and German Row. In each, evil wares were to be sold to those who cared not for their souls. As with lesser fairs, one particular item was chief over all others, and at that time, it was the wares of Rome. For her merchandise sold well at that time, though was somewhat out of fashion in British Street.

In its former place, the prince of princes had himself come to visit. After which—for he saw for himself how unsuitable the Sinai Way was for the new pilgrimage—he began the new road, which caused the town to be

rebuilt elsewhere, though various vanity villages have always existed wheresoever folk have dwelt. And at his visit, Vanity Fair had tempted him to stay.

Some say that Be'elzebub himself, the chief lord of this fair, met the prince and, finding that he had fasted long, offered him the choicest food of the town. But the prince had merely chosen to wait for better food.

They say that he had also invited the prince to prove his father's love—which many doubted—to the whole town. But the prince had declared that such shows were but vain, and that they with eyes to see, would see such love soon enough.

He had also guided the prince—they said—through the bustling streets, as if through the whole world, and promised him them all, and all the vanities thereof. Yea, and if that were not enough, even to make him the new lord of the fair, if he would but bend a little, and perhaps buy a trinket or two. Angry with the whole show, the prince had sternly declined, and thereupon left the town—after some abuse—without laying out so much as a brass farthing upon its vanities, saying sadly that they were not worth even that much.

But such memories die hard, and the dwellers of the town were still annoyed by the prince. After all, who did he think he was? Had they not been good enough for him? Who was he, to call them vain? Pilgrims, as people of the prince, were also held askance and without favour. So when Christian and Faithful entered, a commotion was soon stirred up.

"Why," said the town dwellers, "these wanderers dress in outlandish garments, so different from our own, and

stand out as sore thumbs. They are fools, bedlams, and outlanders. Why, even their speech is barbaric, boorish, and uncouth. Who can understand them?" For they spoke a dialect called, Spiritual, while the town dwellers spoke a dialect called, Worldly.

It was not that they could not converse. It was rather the tone in which they conversed, and the themes of conversation, which differed. In fact, the speech of both parties grated on the other. Some few of the town, did indeed seek short discourse with them, both or singularly, but few were edified.

Particularly annoying, indeed unforgiveable, was the fact that the wayfarers were uninterested in the vanities at the fair. Was that not to condemn the fair, to rubbish the town that hosted it, and the chief lord of the fair? Should not such disrespectful pilgrims pay the penalty of their sin? Why, when invited to purchase by friendly words, they covered their ears, turned away, and upwards looked—as if their trade and traffic was in heaven—crying: "Avert our eyes from worthless things. Help us to live by your word." Yet they spoke unto thin air, confirming thus their madness.

Chapter 25

Vanity Enangered by Truth

Then I saw in my dream, that one rascal, mocking such as louts, shouted out: "What'll you buy, good sirs?" Boldly they repeated that they bought the truth. Thus, they stoked up the fires of anger against them. Then they were soundly mocked, taunted, reproached, and pushed and shoved, by all and sundry.

Such hubbub stirred up the whole town, and a leader of the town, with some servants, quickly intervened and arrested Christian and Faithful. Then they were manhandled into the town court, for an initial hearing of the charges brought against them. There was the serious charge of causing havoc and mayhem to the peaceful affairs of the fair, and other charges too. They were shackled, and shoved into the dock as wik-hals.

Then the town sheriff briefly heard accusations made by sundry of the townsfolk, both busybodies and merchants. Then he looked sternly at those in the dock. Who were the accused? Where did they hail from? Why did they have such outlandish clothing? Was it a protest movement? An insurrection? Did they plan to put down roots in the town, and to become good citizens, or were they headed elsewhere?

In short, the prisoners replied that they were pilgrims, foreigners to the town, who had come from Destruction, a chief city to the east. They had exchanged their former tatty coats, for robes of righteousness, in order to walk the Pilgrim Way, which went through Vanity Fair, and was taking them to Mount Zion.

As to the several charges, they were all false save one. For unfair dislike had been taken to them, and their accusers perjured themselves, for the truth was not in them. Would an honest judge not discriminate truth from error? As to the true charge against them, they happily confirmed that when asked to buy, they had said that they would happily buy the truth, but bought not, because truth was not on offer.

Now, they who interrogated them, did not believe that the accusers should be dismissed so readily. They were, after all, fellow townsfolk, and as to truthfulness, why, they were just the same as them, or better. These pilgrims seemed to imply that one of their town was untrue, indeed that all their townsfolk were untrue. And that was a truth not to be borne.

Therefore to local eyes, both Christian and Faithful seemed guilty. For where law is against the truth, truth must be unlawful. And they were dragged from the court, beaten up, besmeared in filth, and thrown into a large basket from the land of Persia. And a lid of lead was put over it. Then that basket was lifted up between heaven and earth. For Vanity did treat the righteous as unrighteous, and the unrighteous as righteous.

In such a woebegone state they lay for days, bearing ignominy, ridicule, jeering, and derision. Rotten food was thrown at them. Water, hardly fit to drink, was their wine. The rancour towards them did but increase, for they responded not to hatred with hatred, but to hatred with love, praying for those who persecuted them. That was insufferable.

But some of the more noble of the town, were kindly moved by such kindness, and being less prejudiced against them, even dared to remonstrate with the less noble of the town, rebuking their abuse of the pilgrims. The less noble then turned against their less biased neighbours, calling them trolls, turncoats, and renegades, who should join the travellers in the cage.

Their neighbours replied that, if anything, the facts seemed to suggest that they in the cage did not deserve to be in it. Were the pilgrims not peaceful and sober, minding their own business? Was it not more likely that some of the town deserved to be caged, even pilloried? As the less noble then turned from violence of words to violence of fists, the town divided in blows.

Then were the poor pilgrims hauled before their interrogators once more. They were also charged with causing the recent fisticuffs at the fair. So being hated, they were beaten pitilessly, and shackled in chains, and paraded up and down the fair, to discourage any who might speak on their behalf, and to encourage any who might speak against them. Thus the justice of the town would best be served.

Far from protesting, Christian and Faithful held their peace, and like lambs before shearers, kept silent. In

their hearts, the few now sided with them, but fearing their neighbours kept their thoughts to themselves. But it was guessed at by the many, and the more enraged were they against Faithful and Christian, for neighbour was now set against neighbour, and brother against sister, and mother against son. They who had been united in vanity, now became divided by truth. Talk of punishment now turned to talk of death.

With some comfort, Faithful and Christian reminded each other that Evangelist had prophesied such a pass. In fact, both secretly wished, somewhat sinfully, that if only one were to be killed, it would be himself. But sinlessly, each committed himself to the good keeping of the king, to dispose of how he thought best. After a while, it was noted that they so comforted each other. To remove this comfort, they were then confined in solitary cells. But they bided their time in patience.

Chapter 26

Faithful Faithlessly Accused

Then I saw in my dream, that at last came the day for the full trial. The honourable judge's name was Lord Evils-good. The charges basically panned out as this. That they had wilfully visited the town whereas to overthrow the lawful merchants of the fair; by guile had caused commotion and division within the fair town; and had incited rebellion against their liege lord by advocating dangerous and damnable notions.

Faithful first was tried. "Sir," said he, "as a true pilgrim, I have only ever opposed those who have opposed him who is above all princes. As for disturbing the peace, I have always fought shy, for I am a man of peace. Those who have been won unto us, were but won by the persuasion of our demeanour, for we made neither song nor dance to win any. They did but examine what we had done and said within this town, and proclaimed our truth and our innocence. If they have rebelled, it is but from untruth to truth. And as to the prince you serve, he is sworn enemy of my king, and so I defy him."

Then the court commanded, that all who had aught to say for their prince, and against the prisoner, should forthwith stand forth and speak. Three witnesses were there, to wit, Messrs. Envy, Superstition, and

Pickthank—a notable talebearer of that town and commonly called Toady. They affirmed themselves hostile witnesses against the accused, and loyal subjects to Prince Be'elzebub.

Said Mr. Envy: "M'lud, I have known this man a fair while, and will happily attest upon my oath before this honourable bench, that he is..." The judge stopped him short, and insisted that he be sworn in before he proceeded. Then Envy continued. "M'lud, this man has already had dubious form, having previously being named Meshubah, and been suspected under that name of manslaughter. M'lud, a runaway, and a namechanger, he is a ne'er-do-well, who deceives by his new name.

"By his own lips, he despises our prince, as indeed he does our people, laws, and customs. He incites rebellion, by what he calls principles of faith and holiness. Through some gift of the gab I admit I envy, he has even persuaded against me some whom had once been with me. I myself heard with my very own ears, him claim that our ways and those of his faith, were diametrically opposed, the unholy and the holy, and that his faith was not to be compromised. Thus he has condemned us and our ways."

The judge asked whether Envy had anything else to say. Replied Envy: "M'lud, I fear that if I spoke *all* that I knew, it would unduly weary this court. Perhaps the other gentlemen should be asked first to speak? If needed—which I doubt—I would be happy to be recalled." The judge agreed with this policy. Mr. Envy therefore stood aside, and Mr. Superstition took his place, being duly sworn in.

Said Mr. Superstition: "M'lud, I have no prior knowledge of this fellow, nor do I wish to know him better. But this

one thing I know, that he is a very pestilent fellow. And that from personal dialogue. For he did tell me to my face, that my religion was naught, a trust in trinkets and human teachings, and no way to please he who is highest. Thus, as your lordship will well see, he charged that our worship is misguided and in vain, and, I suppose, that we will all be damned. Now if that charge is not damning, I do not know what is. I really have no more to say."

Then Mr. Pickthank was sworn in, and as a loyal subject of the prince of that town, bidden to speak against the prisoner. Said Mr. Pickthank: "M'lud, and notable worthies of the court, I have known this fellow all too long. In private speech with him within this town, he railed to me against our noble prince, and honourable friends of his highness. To wit, against Lord Old Nature, Lord Carnal Delight; Lord Luxurious, Lord Desire Vainglory; old Lord Lechery; Sir Yet-having Greedy, and many more noble gentlemen to boot. And may I say that I hold them in highest esteem, and happily serve them?

"He said, moreover, that if only we all converted to his way of thinking, then all these good gentlemen would be banned from good society by the good of society, for the good of society. But it would not be to *my* good, m'lud, since only by their grace do I stand in this town in good standing, a standing that this shameless villain holds but in contempt. And indeed m'lud, if I may make so bold, he called *you* an ungodly villain, holding you in contempt, and this court likewise. I cannot but disagree."

Chapter 27

Blind Hatred

Then I saw in my dream, that with a thunderous face, the judge shook his fist at Faithful, whose face was like an angel's. "So sirrah," said the judge, "methinks that you are a runagate, a heretic, and a traitor. What say you to what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against you? Speak now if you have any defence. Only be brief, or else be silent as the guilty wretch that you are. For though it is plain to all, that you deserve death without delay, yet I will have it plain to all that this court is just and merciful, even to such a wretched worm as you, vile varlet though you be."

Then Faithful answered. "Firstly, to respond to Mr. Envy, I said only that whatever is against the king's book, is against my faith. For his book is for the best government of the people by the people, and for the people. The gift that persuades is this book. If I have spoken unwell, correct me, and I will be corrected.

"Secondly, to respond to Mr. Superstition, I said only that for true worship, there is required true faith, not force by man. And that for true faith there must be required true revelation from above, not human shaped religion, but a revealing of the king's own person and will. And thus therefore that it stands to reason, that whatever is added

to, or subtracted from, true worship, cannot come from true revelation, and must come from human imaginings, from a lesser faith which is not in line with eternal life. And should we value that which values not life?

"Thirdly, to respond to Mr. Pickthank, without railing, I said only that the prince of this town—and such as this gentleman has named—are better suited for damnation, than for decent society. Oh, and I added that I would rather die with the king's mercy than live with yours, and would not curry favour at the expense of truth."

"Gentlemen of the jury", said the judge, "you see this disgusting little man brought down a peg or two, who has caused such an uproar in our peaceful town. You have heard weighty evidence from worthy gentlemen of this town against him. You have even heard him condemn himself by his own admissions and scurrilous protestations. Your verdict with hang him or hail him. I must now first read you some relevant laws to consider.

"In an ancient land, an Act was made by a great pharaoh, who served well our prince, that to prevent a persuasive people among them of contrary opinion from gaining the upper hand, their newborn boys should all be drowned. Indeed, one slipping the net, caused untold damage to that land, proving thus the wisdom of that law.

"In another ancient land, an Act was made by the Great King, Nebuchadnezzar, who too served our prince, that, to force conformity on all as regards religion, any who did not worship his golden statue in his own image, would be thrown alive into a fiery furnace.

"In that same land, an Act was later made, by one King Darius, that anyone who invoked in prayer anyone except himself for the next full month—and it was a test of

loyalty—should be thrown to the lions, for only those seeking his favour were fit to live.

"Now this ill fellow arraigned before you, is just the sort which these Acts sought most reasonably to prevent. Why, he has disobeyed their intent in mind—which we should police—and in word and deed, which is intolerable. The Act of that pharaoh, sought but to prevent rebellion happening, but clearly this fellow is already a rebel. Against the second and third Acts, you have heard for yourselves how he refuses to conform and flatter, holding to a higher authority than do we. For such treason, he deserves no better than the death he expects.

"So you must now withdraw and deliberate among yourselves, without fear or favour, heeding not even my opinions, but only the relevant laws that I have reminded you of, and the honest and damning evidence of the witnesses, and the defiance of the prisoner himself. I hope that none of you will show any seed of rebellion, by untoward leniency which the court would treat ill."

The twelve jurors, good and true men, were Mr. Blind-man, Mr. No-good, Mr. Malice, Mr. Love-lust, Mr. Live-loose, Mr. Reckless, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Conceited, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Hate-light, and Mr. Pitiless. They had a full and frank discussion, which ended as it began, in the satisfying knowledge that in this they were of one mind, that Faithful was guilty of all charges brought against him, and should be rid from the world without further ado.

The records of the foreman, Mr. Blind-man, do show that their unanimity was clear from the outset, and a few opening statements from them all, might be good to list. He himself led the way: "I hope you will follow

my lead in seeing this knave to be a miscreant." Mr. No-good: "He is not my sort. Let us remove him from the face of the earth." Mr. Malice: "Yea, for I hate his very looks, since I know he hates mine." Mr. Love-lust: "I have never stomached him, and his virtuous airs make no sense to me." Mr. Live-loose: "Nor I, for he criticises my right to live as I wish." Mr. Reckless: "Just get rid of him. Hang him high for the crows, for all I care." Mr. Cruelty: "Hanging's too good for the likes of him, and the crows moreover would choke, not that I'd care. But make him suffer and suffer again." Mr. Conceited: "A baseborn and useless looser, guilty for sure. It is his mischance not to be as I." Mr. Enmity: "My heart rose up against him, the moment I clapped eyes on the fiend." Mr. Liar: "Believe me, he is a scoundrel fit for death." Mr. Hate-light: "The sooner he's snuffed out, the better, for he gets on my wick." Mr. Pitiless: "Spare him not, nor kindness show, for I would not live in the same world as he."

The judge smiled wickedly when their verdict was delivered, and sentenced Faithful to a most cruel death. He was duly dragged to a lawful place of execution. There he was flogged, and beaten, stabbed with knives and sliced with swords, stoned, wine given to extend his pain, then strapped to a stake, and his body burned until only ashes remained in this world.

Beyond the vision of man, shining ones stood ready after his body departed to receive his spirit, faithful even unto a wicked death. And they escorted him with high honour and with heavenly trumpets, to the river which he walked across and thence unto Celestial City. And so his pilgrimage ended before that of Christian, who lay languishing in fetters.

Chapter 28

Good Company, Bad Company

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian was cast back into jail, to rot awaiting trial. Though somewhat envious—and that was sin—he rejoiced in his friend's good fortune, who had held fast to his prince, had not denied the faith, and had been slain as a faithful witness, even in a town wherein sat a throne of Be'elzebub himself. And this song he sang, of which the other prisoners did hear. "Faithful pilgrim, who did the prince profess; Away is now, from enemies, at rest. While faithless folk, enslaved in vain delights; See not the truth, but die in hellish plights. Yet Faithful sings, for he will always thrive; For where he is, he is now more alive."

And the prison shook and quaked. It may have been that that enabled Christian to make good his escape. Or it may have been that a townsman, who had turned to the truth, effectuated his escape. Yet whether by hook or by crook, escape he did. And with him went Aelpis, who had dwelt long in Vanity. And Christian renamed him, Hopeful.

Thus, as with the phoenix, one seemed burned to ashes, yet another arose from the ashes. And Hopeful walked now with Christian. And, said Hopeful, he

expected that many more, moved by the unjust judge, and the unjustly judged, would soon take up the Pilgrim Way.

And soon was a third, for a certain Mr. By-ends, hastened up to them as they left the outskirts of Vanity Town. To their welcome, he said that he was from Conscam Town, and was travelling to Celestial City.

"From Conscam?" exclaimed Christian. "Why, is there any virtue in that town?" By-ends replied, that he certainly hoped so, and indeed believed that there was. "And what is your name, sir?" asked Christian.

"It is enough that though you do not know me, nor I you, that if we are headed the same way, I would enjoy your company. Else, I must be content to walk alone", replied By-ends. Asked about his hometown, he replied that it was certainly a rich town, with easy profit to be quickly made. Christian asked whether he had kinfolk who lived there.

"Why yes," he replied, "and all enjoy the rich life. We are an old reputable family, very influential in our town and beyond. Why, Lord Conscam, descended in direct line from he who named the town, is chief. Yet we also boast in Lord Turn-about, Lord Time-server, Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Facing-both-ways, and Mr. Any-thing. Even the parson, Mr. Two-tongues, is an uncle. I tell you, I am from good stock, a gentleman of quality, who is far higher in the world than was my grandfather, who was but a waterman, but who had the skill to look one way and to row the other. The skill runs in my family, and what I have, was gained that way."

Asked Christian: "Are you a married man, sir, and religious?"

"Happily married, yes," replied By-ends, "to a virtuous woman of virtuous stock. I was more than happy to marry her, once I discovered that my mother-in-law would be Lady Feigning, an aristocrat from the highest of circles. My good lady wife knows how to behave before princes and peasants, gaining me advantage with both. As to religion, we honour it if it honours us, and we are not overly strict. For we always go the easiest way. We have deep affection for silver-slippered religion, which walks merrily in the sunshine, and loves the love of the people."

Then Christian excused himself, and had a quiet word with Hopeful: "If, as I suspect, our new companion is By-ends of Conscam, then we have picked up as bad a companion as this land provides." Hopeful said that it might be best to ask him if that was his name, and Christian agreed. Going back to By-ends, he asked him straight whether he was By-ends of Conscam.

"It is not my real name, but a nickname given to me, sir—to my discomfiture—by the envious and malicious. But I bear it as a suffering saint. And no, good sir"—for Christian had then asked whether just cause lay behind his nickname—"I have given no cause to be so named and shamed. Though you could say that I am quick to see which way the wind blows, and I follow it by any means to gain my best ends. I go wheresoever it flows, and I gain therefrom. If happily I gain from such sound judgement, I account it a reward, not a reproach."

"I suspect," said Christian, "that this name fits you better than you allow."

Chapter 29

Fine Weather is Fine

Then I saw in my dream, that By-ends was annoyed: "Suspect what you will," he said, "but you will still find me a fine companion, so long as the journey be fine."

"But if you travel with us," Christian said, "you will have to stick with us in all weathers, for we at times must go against the wind, and walk whether in rain or in shine, whether with fullness or with emptiness. For our religion at times walks in silver-slippers to public applause, and at times walks bound in iron, barefoot on rough and frosty roads. We seek no fair-weather friends. You must choose your companions over the seasons, not the seasons over your companions."

By-ends protested that Christian sought to restrict his liberty to come or go as he chose according to the seasons. He still, he said, wished to walk with them, but only on his terms. That, Christian would not allow. "Very well", huffed By-ends. "Then I will jolly well walk alone, until I find better company, which will welcome my old principles. Which I tell you, have not harmed me, and have but enriched me. Humph!"

Hopeful and Christian walked on, and By-ends followed at a respectable distance. Soon, company

more to his apparent liking, caught up with him. Their names were Mr. Hold-the-world, Mr. Money-love, and Mr. Save-all. They had been at school with Mr. By-ends, and their schoolmaster had been Mr. Gripe-man, who had hailed from Love-gain, a market town in Coveting County, which lay in the north. Their teacher had well taught his scholars how to get rich, whether by violence, treachery, flattery, lying, or wearing the mask of godly religion. All four had once been prefects.

Having shaken hands in greeting, Mr. Money-love asked Mr. By-ends about they who walked ahead. "They come from a far country, and are following their path of pilgrimage", he replied. Then Money-love exclaimed that if they would but dawdle, he would love to catch them up, since they were all journeying on pilgrimage. But By-ends explained: "Alas, they would not make good company, for they are rigid pilgrims, and over-proud in their opinions. Unless you jump to obey in all things, they will cast you out."

Then Mr. Money-love said: "I have heard before of some overly righteous, who turn as harsh judges upon those who are more discreet. On what, pray tell, did you differ? For it is good to judge the ins and the outs, and to be prepared should we meet."

"Why," said By-ends, "they were for walking in all weathers, rather than adjusting their walk to the weather. I wait for wind and tide; they would row. They offer their lives willy-nilly for their king. I, only what is safe. They follow the Book, even at cost of resentment. I only follow it when it causes no loss and pays well. They would be religious, whether it is in rags or in riches. I would be so, only when religion is dressed in her fineries."

Then Hold-the-world piped up: "Ah, you never want to change, either. You would be a fool to give up your riches and your liberty, for rags and bondage. We are as wise as serpents, making hay while the sun shines, and sheltering when the chilly winds blow. Even bees follow this wisdom. Let the fools ahead elect the chilly winds if they will, but it is not for us. As to the king's ways, why, why should we, when he has bestowed riches upon us, walk in rags? The smooth without the rough, is enough. Did not Abraham and Solomon grow rich through their religion? Did not the Temanite, say that those favoured by the king, would lay up gold as dust? Poor pilgrims know not the way, and fail in faith."

Save-all suggested that they were probably all agreed, so needed not to speak further of such. Money-love agreed: "No, no more words need be said. We have reason and the Good Book on our side. Those against both, lack both liberty and safety."

Chapter 30

Should Religion be Servant?

Then I saw in my dream, that By-ends suggested that he begin a new discussion, to while away the time as they walked. “Suppose,” he said, “that someone, whether their vocation be things spiritual or things secular, sees a great advantage to be had. But to get it, they have to appear more religious than is their wont, meddling in matters not to their taste. Is it against honesty to use such means, to their personal ends?”

Said Money-love: “I see what you are getting at. Firstly, let us consider a minister of religion. Let us assume that they make a small income, but lay eyes on a more advantageous parish on offer. Let us suppose that to obtain it, they must appear more zealous than they are, and must preach more often than they do, and shave their beliefs to gain backers. I for one would have no problem with someone with the gifts and call of such vocation, grasping promotion with two honest hands.

“After all, aiming higher is not a sin. Is it not a sight set by providence? Is it not an axiom to get what you can, when you can, by however you can? And besides, the means to obtain, make them the better, for they have practiced more zeal and more sermonising, thus pleasing the king. As to moderating their opinions to fit the world,

this shows their kindly side. For it shows that by denying former opinions, they are self-denying—and that is virtue. And it shows that they are of a sweet and winning disposition towards others—and that is their calling.

"In short, they have used fair means to profit them—as good policy commends. They should not be called covetous. Nay, they should be commended for their industry in gaining their ends, and their help given in the gaining. They become worthy of more wealth, and of better community use."

Said Money-love: "Secondly, let us consider a merchant. Let us assume that they make a small income, but lay eyes on opportunities to their advantage, perhaps to marry into wealth, or to gain higher-class customers. Let us suppose that to obtain it, they must feign zeal in religion. I for one see no lawful impediment against using religion for financial gain, helping someone and hurting none.

"After all, for whatever reason we pick it up, religion is a virtue. Nor does the law naysay marrying into wealth, or gaining better customers. And the ends are all good: religion is good—when it works to our good; the religious are helped by the good; gaining marriage for money is good (what is wrong with marriage?); getting wealthy customers for wealth is good (what is wrong with customers?). All in all, and more, the good is promoted."

All agreed that this was most wise and honest argumentation. And in that assurance, and wishing to win their case, they hailed Christian and Hopeful to halt a while so to speak. They hoped thus to crow over their wisdom. And lest the strangers make renewed attack against Mr. By-ends, they appointed Mr. Hold-the-world to propound the question unto them.

Chapter 31

Slippery Tongue, Slippery Slope

Then I saw in my dream, that after brief introductions, Mr. Hold-the-world put the question to Christian and Hopeful.

Said Christian: "Why, the newest pilgrim could answer. It was wrong to follow the prince for mere bread (as the sixth chapter of John's Gospel shows), and it is wrong to follow his religion to gain the world. Would you be as pagans, as hypocrites, as demons, as sorcerers?

"As for pagans, when Shechem, son of Hamor, sought to marry a rich daughter of Jacob, he and his people were happy to buy into Jacob's religion—in measure—thus using religion as a stalking-horse to obtain their ends. He and his people soon perished.

"As for hypocrites, the Pharisees had also begun to employ purity as pretence, and to worm their way into widows' houses for ill gain. Their condemnation was thus the greater.

"As to demons, the man of Kerioth was likened unto Be'elzebub. Yet he walked closely with the prince. Yet that was to make money, for he was both treasurer and thief. His end was just.

"As for sorcerers, did not Simon of Samaria, try to buy the spirit of holiness, that he might unholy money make? Have you not read of his doom?

"And as to reason," continued Christian, "is it not likely that they who pick up religion to gain gain, are as likely to put down religion to lose loss? Did not Judas put down the prince, when he suited him not? True religion is to be the lord, not the servant."

Then the four stood discombobulated, and urged the two to walk on ahead of them, for they would not walk as one. And Christian said to Hopeful, that if they had been so easily silenced by human voice, how much quicker would they be silenced by heavenly voice, and the deeper condemned. Then they walked in pleasant ease for a while, until they came to Lucre Hill.

Now this hill had a silver mine dug deeply down. And that lay somewhat off the path. Some, leaving the path to see the mine, had fallen in, for it had slippery slopes without fencing. Some had fallen short, breaking bones but not necks, and lived to tell the tale yet rue the day. Some had fallen far, and spoke not of their fall.

A gentleman named Demas lived in a shack by the mine, and out he came. "Ey up! good sirs. Come here and see a wonder well worth your while."

"What is worth leaving our way?" Christian asked.

"Just this," said Demas, "that this mine has wealth for all, and that for short stay you shall have rich pay."

Hopeful was eager to tarry a while, for indeed they carried but little silver, and no gold, and still had a way to go. But Christian warned him against it. "I have heard of this man, and of this place, and how some are

maimed and some are slain, who adventure the mine. It is thus a snare to pilgrims who walk the narrow way."

Then he enquired of Demas, whether it wasn't indeed a place of grave danger. "It is safe enough, except one be careless", he replied, although he blushed as if he were somewhat shamed.

Christian and Hopeful agreed between themselves, to stay on the path, but reckoned that the party behind would probably fall into the trap, if invited, and would not be stayed by their advice. But when Demas tempted them again, Christian rounded on him: "Demas, you who were once a good pilgrim, have become an enemy to pilgrims, and unless you repent you will be rightly condemned by the prince. Why should we leave the way for you, and so share your shame?"

"I am still a good pilgrim, good sir," said Demas "and would gladly walk with you a way, if you will but tarry a while. Though as to my name, you have the right of it."

"Demas, I have heard it said that you come from the line of Gehazi, who became unclean through his lust for silver, and in spirit are of Judas, who sold his prince for silver. I greatly fear that you deserve the rope around your neck, not merely upon your back. We shall speak of your deeds done here, when we meet with the king of this highway." And he and Hopeful departed.

It may well be that this Demas, having fled to save his skin, leaving his friend and colleague Paul to face the music alone, had come to malign the way, in order not to malign himself. Perhaps in such a state he had fallen in with silver, and maybe with the slender, in order to fill the void he had created within. But the shame was that he had given up heavenly gold for earthly silver.

Maybe thus he had come in time to resent those who walked the path he had so cravenly deserted. For nothing offends the cowardly, so much as bravery. Perhaps in time he would repent, and return to the path, and come safe to the Golden City. But left alone, he gained some satisfaction in the loss of others, for a bitter root had grown up, and self-inflicted wounds festered within.

By-ends and his companions soon met old Demas, and at his first words, they gladly forsook the path in order to peer. Did they fall to their deaths? Did they abide there to mine? Did they die from noxious fumes within? We know only that they were never seen again.

Chapter 32

Warning and Waxing

Then I saw in my dream, that the pilgrims came across an ancient and well weathered monument. It looked like a drunken sculpture of a woman, though by now it was well worn by the winds. Searching for clues, Hopeful's eye alighted on a plaque, also faded with time. Looking therefore closer, they managed to read these words: *Remember Lot's Wife*. Christian alone knew the language of the writing, yet both had heard the story. For readers of the Book it was a common tale, how Lot's wife, fleeing from the old to the new, had stayed her flight even as her heart had stayed, and had become a pillar of salt, encrusted to death.

"Oh," said Christian, "what would have become of us, my brother, had we looked back at the behest of Demas; had we fixed our eyes on silver, as you were tempted to do. Might there have been two more statues, my friend?"

"I confess," said Hopeful, "that for a moment I sorely fingered silver within my mind. But for grace, I should perhaps have fared worse than Lot's wife. For she but looked back to her rustic home, from a rugged path to unknown. Whereas I would have looked back from the golden highway of heaven, to the silver mine of earth."

"But like us," said Christian, "she had been saved from an evil town, even Sodom, but not from her inner folly. So let us keep before us, that having been saved, we must press onwards to deeper salvation, for damnation has a long arm."

Hopeful agreed: "To remember Lot's wife, is to remind ourselves of the penalty of sin, unless in grace the king does remit it. Many are the sins that are set before our feet. Her turning back to sin, is but one. The contemptuous rebellions of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with all their flocks, also became lasting warning to us who follow in exodus from slavery into freedom. And the love of this world, wooed Demas back into the chains of the world, who otherwise a noble martyr could have been. I wonder whether he remembered Lot's wife, afore he looked back to his hometown where maybe wealth and safety called unto him."

Christian replied that the folly of Demas was a thing to be wondered at. For one to ignore such a reminder so close by, was like to a pickpocket who picks a judge's pocket, knowing the judge. She had deserved her fate. Why, though her home had been there, and though she knew not where she was being taken, yet she had known the great sinfulness of Sodom, and how better than any human court, the king had judged its people. It had been a place well blessed with fertile land, and even by one who had walked with Abraham, and knew of the high calling. Yet exceedingly did they sin, and exceedingly became a warning to the nations, even unto the present day.

Hopeful again gave thanks to his king, that his feet had been stayed, and his fancy had not received its just

deserts. And now they travelled besides a delightful river. Streaming from Celestial City, it was called by some, The King's River, and by others, The River of Death, for some, whose time had come, crossed there to the other side. But all called its waters, The Waters of Life. Apart from various way-places, this was notable for its refreshing of the soul. And the pilgrims felt at ease. Here they had as much to drink as they did wish, and the water was sweeter than wine. And goodly trees were abundant on both banks of the river, loaded with fine fruit, on which they did feast. And the leaves were good for both healing the cuts, and relieving the bruises, which they had acquired on the way. Only their scars remained. For they had been received in royal battle, and were as medals of honour.

Beyond the trees lay fair meadows, wondrous green in all seasons, and strangely having patches of whitest lilies. And there they slept in safety, pavilioned, as it were, under the wings of the almighty. And they woke, and they ate and drank, and they slept again once, twice, and thrice. And each morn, the travel stains upon their garments became less, until they were no more. And Christian and Hopeful, with ease of heart, happily sang this song: "How once we thought, that dream must be this stream; But from it sip, and now for source we dream. Here leaves do heal, and fruit our bodies fill; And safe lie here, where we can fear no ill. With fragrant scent, of paradise delight; And flowers white, on green bed ever bright."

Chapter 33

A Most Terrible Night

Then I saw in my dream, that at last the call came unto them, to arise and go further, for paradise, not merely its fair shadow, awaited them. Obedient to the heavenly call, they therefore arose, but were more than a little saddened, that their highway led them somewhat away from the river. Moreover, the path became rough beneath their feet, and they were sore tempted to return to the sweet valley. Yet their faith held them onwards.

However, though resisting the temptation to go backwards, they were tempted to go sidewards. For on their left was a well hedged meadow, named Bypass Meadow. And a stile there was, for the convenience of pilgrims. Christian climbed over the stile, and walked a little along the footpath. So far as his eyes could see—and he had walked up a gentle rise—the footpath kept close to the highway. Then he returned to Hopeful.

"My good brother," said Christian, "why should we choose the rough over the smooth, when the meadow way runs alongside the highway?" Hopeful was not so hopeful, and doubted departing the clear path, for the unclear. However, Christian dismissed his doubts, and

Hopeful, feeling indebted to his exemplar, took to the easier path.

Soon they came across another man on the footpath, whose name was Vain-confidence. He told them that he had walked that footpath in his youth, and seen where it led, but that at that time had turned back unto his father and mother, his sisters and brothers, knowing that at any time he could make that journey to its end. And, he told them confidently, it led to Celestial City—had he not espied its gates from afar?

"As I presumed," said Christian unto Hopeful, "we have chosen the better path." And happily they followed Vain-confidence, who by their courtesy walked a little ahead, for, he said, he always preferred his own company. And as the sun waned, they saw not that another hedge to the right, diverged from that which bordered the highway. And still they followed Vain-confidence, or thought that they did, for he was harder now to see. And when night came on, he was impossible to see, nor could he see.

Truly the Book does say, that those who walk at night without light within or without, are prone to stumble. And so did poor Vain-confidence stumble careless into a deep pit, dug to catch such fools. And it is a mercy that Hopeful and Christian did stand still, and not follow their leader, but awaited the day to dawn. They called to Vain-confidence, but heard only his groans. And such was the lie of the land, that they could not fully discern from which direction came the groans, and now feared lest traps had been laid around them.

And Christian and Hopeful quarrelled. For Hopeful asked where they were, knowing full well that Christian knew not the answer, and guessing that he had blindly misled him. Christian did not reply, no, not even when the rain of thunder began to fall upon them, on that most wretched and shelterless night, when fear froze them to the path like ice.

It did not help when Hopeful lamented that his doubts should have been heeded. Christian had bitterly replied that the footpath had certainly looked alright, and that Hopeful had earlier been grateful. Hopeful had then said that he hadn't wished to complain before, because he had expected Christian to have had a great deal more sense, being the older.

With rain dripping through his beard, Christian bowed his head, admitting that he was rightly rebuked, and had erred in his heart, and not simply in his mind. "I beg you to forgive me, good brother, for in truth I led you amiss, so that you too do suffer from my folly. May the king have mercy on us both, that we die not away from his highway."

Then Hopeful took stock, and heartily forgave his brother. Adding that he had hopes that it would all turn to their blessing. And he gave Christian a beefy bear hug, notwithstanding the torrential rain and chill blackness of the night. And Christian, his heart warm once more, suggested that they should, with caution, try to wend their way back along the footpath. At least, he said, so as to weather the storm under some little shelter they had not long passed, which was also a little higher up. Besides, their path now was running with water, and there was a real fear that they were now in

an old river bed, which was fast awakening. Hopeful offered to go first.

"Please, let me go first," said Christian, "since if there is danger behind, it is I who should face it first, since it was I who led you into danger."

"No," replied Hopeful, "I shall go first, for your very remorse might lead you astray."

Then a voice back along that way, shouted these words of encouragement: "Set your hearts upon the highway that you did walk, and turn again, oh turn again." The waters now were swirling around their feet, yea, even to their ankles, and they bethought them that it can be easier to turn from the right to the wrong, than return from the wrong to the right.

But with much difficulty and slip and bruise, they waded against the rising flow, which now endangered them terribly. And indeed, at the end they pulled themselves out of the old river by reason of strong tree roots. But without the shy peeping of the moon through the storm clouds of night, they would surely have met their ends there, not once but ten times once.

On higher ground, they sat down, and wept. But at least there, they had some comfort from wind and weather, though not from wet. And there they shivered, and dripped, and slept. And they awaited for the sun to arise once more in cloudless sky, and to safely find again the stile. Yet hope can disappoint.

Chapter 34

The Dungeon of Despair

Then I saw in my dream, that nearby lay Doubting Castle. The master thereof, was Giant Despair. Had his heart been as big as his body, and his soul as fine as his face—as giant faces go—then they would have been well content. But in the dawning of the morning, walking alone in what he called his meadows, that Wednesday he espied them forlorn and fast asleep.

With a stern and surely voice, he rudely awoke them, demanding their names and cause for trespass. They humbly apologised, saying that they were but poor pilgrims who had strayed from the highway, seeking to rejoin it nearer to Mount Zion. "So," he boomed, "you have broken into my meadows, doubtless caused damage you will deny, and have in audacity lounged the night in my copse as lazy louts? I have a way of dealing with such clodhoppers." And taking each by an arm, enarmoured and emboldened, he forced them to his castle.

Indeed they felt too ashamed of themselves to fight—both for leaving the king's highway, and for trespassing onto the giant's land, as they now supposed it to be. But in truth, neither alone nor together, could they have resisted his offer of hospitality, for he was mighty.

He pulled and pushed them, so that again and again they did stumble and bleed. Within his castle, he stripped Christian of his armour, and berated them until mid-afternoon. Then the sun grew dark, there were earth shakes, and they felt deserted by all help. Whereupon he cast them into a very deep and damp dungeon, as dark as death, and depressing to both body and soul. In that pit of despair, the faces of friends and family could not be seen, and each was to his companion an unseen darkness of melancholy.

They lay there until the next day, without food or water, wrapped only in shreds as shrouds. And Christian bore the double portion of grief, since he had insisted on leaving the king's highway, persuading thus his friend.

The giant had a wife, scarcely smaller than himself. Her name was Diffidence. Some called her, Soulshrink. When he had gone to bed, he had told her about his new prisoners, now safely stowed below ground for trespassing on his grounds. And he asked her advice on what to do with them. In turn, she asked for details of what he had discovered when he had questioned them. Told where they were from, and were headed, she gnashed her teeth. "In the morning, go and beat them good and proper", she said.

So early the next day, he went down to the dungeon, and, taking with him a crab-tree cudgel, he first fell into name-calling. Next, he took to beating them soundly, until they cried piteously. Then he left them to feast on sighs and lamentations.

When he told her that he had left them alive, she suggested that the next day he urge them to take their own lives—for the couple had a little concern lest the king would punish them, should they slay his pilgrims.

"You will never come out of here alive," he boomed that morning, "so end your miserable lives while I offer you such mercy. My wife has begged me to give each of you these three options. One, to take this knife, and plunge it into your heart. Two, to take this rope, and strangle or hang yourself. Three, and I think the kindest. Take this poison, for it is sweet to the taste, though its sting is bitter. Elsewise, each day I shall beat you, as the mood takes me."

When they begged for the mercy of letting them leave free, he flew into a fit of rage. Death drew nigh them that time, but he stopped short, suddenly suffering from a touch of paralysis of the hands, to which he was prone, and he withdrew to let them stew.

"Hopeful," said Christian, "I know not whether it be better to live in long bitterness, or to depart now in quick death. Is it better to choke, than to be crippled? Is the grave not more peaceful than the dungeon? Must we live under Despair?"

"Christian, my dear brother and friend, our lot is dreadful, and death would be welcome. But loth am I to take my life, other than at my lord's bidding.[4] Is not our life, and our death, and our ease, at his bidding? Besides,

[4] Bunyan argued that self-killing was murder, and would lead only to hell. In *Masks of Melancholy*, Christian psychiatrist John White argued a more lenient position. I dissent from Bunyan.

Giant Despair has not the final word. For otherwise, why should he have us die under our own hand, rather than under his, unless he fears judgement? I have also heard rumours, that some have managed to escape from Despair. Perhaps we too, by contrivance earthly or heavenly, shall be delivered? Mayhap the giant shall die before we, or absentmindedly leave unlocked the dungeon door?"

Chapter 35

Is Escape by Death, Justified?

Then I saw in my dream, that Hopeful grew militant: "If he comes to thrash us again, I might try my best to slay him before he should slay us. Is it not as justified to kill him, as to kill a murderer to save from murder, and to be as Avengers of Blood? Mayhap we shall, if he suffers another fit. I almost tried that before, but I was still too sore. At the least, let us see how things go for a while, rather than welcome his presents." And Christian came to see the wisdom of Hopeful's words, and consoled his soul in patience, though his body sore ached.

The next day, Giant Despair again visited them, to remove their bodies from that pit. They feebly begged him for food and drink and ointments for their wounds, for they could scarce move and were faint. But he ranted and raved that they had refused his gifts, and warned them that their fate would be like those who had wished that they had never been born. Then off he stormed to see his wife.

Christian, all atremble, then asked whether they should take up Despair's offer, before it was withdrawn. But Hopeful again argued against it. "Christian, you have been down before, but never out.

Remember how both Apollyon, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death, failed to crush you. You have sailed through great storms, with faith in your heart. Why is faith now so far from you, and fear so near?

"I am here too, and a far weaker man, yet treated equally as you have been by this giant, by beatings given and food deprived, and by dire imprisonment. But yet I, under the same tyranny, urge you to hope, and to remember how you stood brave at Vanity Fair, even when lifted up from the earth. And though Faithful died a cruel death, did you not tell me that you envied his death over your freedom? Let us therefore be patient, whatever betide."

Meanwhile Giant Despair had once more spoken to his wife about the prisoners: "They are defiant in adversity, and refuse to lie down and die", he grumbled.

Mrs. Diffidence had lost her temper: "Drag them out by their ears, and show them the bones and skulls of those who have died in our dungeon. Say that tomorrow at dawn, you will beat them sore, lash their backs, and then tear them limb from limb. Then let us see if they will take their own lives!"

As he was bidden, her husband then stomped back down to the dungeon once more. He then dragged his prisoners to the courtyard, in which in a corner, lay a large pile of skulls and bones, and rotting garments. He then threatened to cruelly kill them at break of day. With that, he beat them up good and proper, then tossed them back into their cell for the night.

When the giant and his wife went to bed, they began to talk of the prisoners. Neither stick nor carrot seemed to prosper their cause, which was that the pilgrims should kill themselves in Despair. "I fear," said

his wife, "that they still hope that either help will come to them, or that they will find the means to free themselves. Maybe this night you should search them and their dungeon thoroughly, lest they have on their persons some picklock to open the doors?"

"But my dear, had they such, would they not have used it last night? And now being tucked up snug in warm bed, I've cold feet to go search cold dungeon. Besides, I think that by dawn they will have ended their miserable lives. But be sure, if they are still recalcitrant, why, I will search them to tooth and bone, just to please you, my lamb."

That same night, Hopeful and Christian set themselves to pray. And in prayer they continued, until nigh the break of day. For indeed to prayer, Giant Despair had driven them, though unintentionally, by promising to dispatch them on the early morrow. And it was only a little before dawn, while they still prayed, that Christian heard as it were a voice say unto him: "You of little strength, have kept my word and have not denied me. Behold, I have placed before you an open door."

Looking up, he beheld that the door was still locked. But then he slapped a hand to his head. "A fool of fools am I, to kneel upon this frozen stone, when walking in the sunshine I might be. So did Moses stand before the Reed Sea, waiting when he should be walking. Only now does it come to mind, that long I have borne a key—surely named Promise—upon my heart. Verily it will open any lock in this unpromising castle." Thereupon Hopeful looked up, and urged Christian to quickly try the key.

Quickly the bolt was unlocked. Quietly the door flew open, as if well-greased, in spite of its rust. Quickly and

quietly did they creep up the stairs, finding there Christian's armour cast aside. And the outer door unto the castle-yard, likewise opened without hitch, once it saw the key. From there, they could hear sonorous snores descending from a room within the keep. Silently they stole fearfully through the yard to the iron gate in the wall, beyond which lay freedom.

This gate, though the lock was damnable hard, yielded also at last to the key. Yet it opened in protest with such a creaking, that the snoring stopped. Then did their silence give way to speed, as they sped with due haste away from the castle.

At loud urgings by his wife, Giant Despair quickly threw on coat and boots, so as to rush out in hot pursuit. But his fit did come upon him, and his wife was no runner, so that the pilgrims were able to make good their escape. Soon they had reclimbed the stile, and felt safe once more, back on the king's highway. Yet the road was rough once more under foot.

Chapter 36

The Four Shepherds

Then I saw in my dream, that standing the right side of the stile, they thought it good to post there a warning, which travellers of the king's highway should read and heed. They doubted not that neither giant nor giantess, would dare to remove any warning raised in the name of the prince. A stone slab they saw nearby on the other side. This they raised, and this they wrote upon it: *This stile leads to land claimed by the master and mistress of Doubting Castle. They oppose the king of Zion. They seek to destroy any pilgrims who venture to walk through Bypass Meadow.* (It is said that many learnt from their lesson, and spurned that stile.) Then they sang as they walked on, "The highway we, for our ease we did leave; Meadow did give, only much we did grieve. From terror then, to dungeon cold and grim; We were hard pressed, bodies and souls grew dim. Beaten and lashed, we turned at last to prayer; From Doubt escaped, and from Giant Despair."

The road soon smoothed. It may well be that toadies of the castle, had roughed up the road to the east, to mislead, if possible, poor pilgrims. In time they came unto Delectable Mountains, a fair mountain range which belonged to their lord prince. There there were

glorious gardens and opulent orchards, vivacious vineyards, and wellspring water as a bubbling brook. Pilgrims passing through, were blessed.

Towards the mountain tops, four shepherds were feeding their flocks. To them the pilgrims went. Then leaning on their ash sticks, as hill walkers do, they stopped to talk.

Asked as to whose land it was, the shepherds replied that it was Prince Immanuel's land, that the flocks were his, and that they themselves served the prince.

Asked if it was the way to Celestial City, the shepherds replied that it was, that the City could be seen from the mountains, and that a good walker could soon make it to the gates.

Asked if there were perils on the way, the shepherds replied, somewhat obscurely, that it was safe for those to whom it was safe, and unsafe for those who disobeyed the prince.

Asked where pilgrims could find good rest and cheer, the shepherds replied that they were bidden to give lodging to all needy strangers. And that to their joy, sometimes they had afterwards realised that they had played host even to messengers of the prince.

And seeing that the pilgrims had journeyed from the east, the shepherds, named Knowledge, Experience, Vigilance, and Genuine, made enquiry of them. Such as, who were they, where had they come from, and, but briefly, how their journey had fared, and what it had taught them. And it seemed to the shepherds, that many began, but few finished, their journey.

Christian and Hopeful were then honoured as guests, and bidden to partake of whatever they pleased. “Once refreshed,” said the shepherds, “let us talk awhile, to know each other the better. As since this day draws to its close, please tarry here the night. And longer, should you choose, to aid your journey.”

When the sun had risen again, they walked with the shepherds upon the mountains, which had fair views on every side. The shepherds, thinking it right to show the pilgrims certain sights, took them to Error Hill, which on one side was surpassingly steep. Loath were they to peer down to its base, and loath were they at the sight. For below were festering bodies. “Those,” said the shepherds, “are the mortal remains of Hymenaeus and Philetus, who stumbled off the path, and fell expecting not a resurrection of their bodies. May their souls rest in peace.”

Then they gingerly climbed up Mount Caution, and saw some people blindly stumbling around, and onto, some tombs. “Did you see a stile to your left, leading to pleasant meadows, with a path which seems to run alongside the king’s highway?” the shepherds asked. “From that stile, leads a path directly to Doubting Castle, and the keep of Giant Despair. These you now see, were once pilgrims who took that path, and were captured by the giant. Not willing to slay, for he is not permitted, he did blind them, and carry them to the tombs. Truly it has been said that they who stray from wisdom’s way, abide within the congregation of the dead.” Hopeful looked to Christian, and they both wept at what could have followed their sin.

Then they walked along a mountainside, wherein was a cave, sealed by a door. The pilgrims were bidden to open the door, and to look within. And lo, it was very dark and smoke laden, and there were rumbles as if of burning, and some cries of deep grief, and the pungent stench of brimstone. "This byway," said the shepherds, "is to hell.[5] Some who despise the way, enter here. It is said that one night, Judas entered this very door."

Hopeful mentioned that fair-faced Judas had, for a time, seemed to have had the makings of a good pilgrim—though the path had not then been laid. And he feared that they had met some of fair face, yet foul heart, and feared for the fates of these. The shepherds said aye, that many might, whether for short or for long, be as pilgrims, yet come to grief of their own making. The pilgrims understood the more, that they both needed to travel in the strength of the prince, and that the more he gave, the more they would be tested.

In the name of the prince, one shepherd gave them a map of the road from this world, to that which is to come. He warned them not to take any other road. One shepherd warned them to beware of Mr. Flatterer. One shepherd warned them not to sleep on Enchanted Ground, for from deathly silence came deadly sleep.

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5 Bunyan had a broad view of hell's inhabitants. I limit names to one probable, Judas. I hold that losing out before death (like Esau), does not mean losing out beyond death. And while Ananias and Sapphira were excommunicated by death as sin-infectious Christians, endangering the infant church, I do not see that that presaged ultimate damnation.

The fourth shepherd gave unto Hopeful, a pilgrim's robe. Indeed he did not lack the true righteousness, which can be seen by those with eyes to see. Yet it still befitted pilgrims, to show unto other eyes, that they walked the king's highway as subjects of the prince of righteousness. And Hopeful asked: "Sir, then should I not have also, a scroll of assurance?" And the shepherd said nay. Truly, one who carries a scroll, carries a blessing. However, Hopeful, having left Vanity through its Gate, did carry that assurance within his heart. And that, unlike a scroll of the hand, no mortal could give, or take away. "The king-speed you both", said the shepherd.

For shepherds and pilgrims knew that the time to part had come. For the task of the shepherd is to stay, and the task of the pilgrim is to journey. The pilgrims were then led to Clear Hill, where, with the aid of a small telescope, they saw the entrance to Celestial City. Yet by reason of their fear that they fail the test, their hands were a little unsteady, and they saw not clearly. Yet as they went on their way, they sang this song: "The shepherds warn, of error in teaching; Of ease beware, lest blind be your walking; Stay true to him, turn not to betrayal; And you will see, the hope of arrival."

Chapter 37

Ignorance and Apostasy

Then I saw in my dream, that Hopeful and Christian left the mountains. On their left lay a little county named Conceit, with a little crooked lane which led to the king's highway. A lively young lad named Ignorance, had just come from there. The pilgrims stopped, and asked him where he hailed from and was going to. Greeting them, he told them in brief, that he was from Conceit, but that very day had thought that it might be nice to visit Celestial City.

Then Christian asked why he assumed that he would be welcome there, since he had set out merely on a whim.

"Good sirs," said he, "I know many good folk who have likewise gone to visit. I am sure that good folk will always be welcomed to good place."

"For my part," said Christian, "I strove hard to be rid of my sin, and to gain the prince's pardon. To the Wicket Gate I was sent, to walk then this highway. And at Mount Golgotha, assurance was given me. How can you be sure that you walk this road aright?"

Said Ignorance: "I know the prince's will. To wit, that one lives well, pays one's debts, prays, fasts, and gives

more help than the law demands. Besides, I am most curious to meet the prince."

"But for you, there is, I fear, no Wicket Gate of the heart, nor heart-yearning to meet the prince", said Christian. "Do you not know, have you not heard, that all who walk the king's highway, must do so as people of the prince, or else shall be deemed as those who roam it as thieves and robbers? Do you think that the City will welcome you as a pilgrim? We are told to do nothing in vain conceit, yet you presume to take yourself to the Holy City."

Said Ignorance: "Good sirs, I must speak plain. I do not know you from Adam. I leave you be, to follow your religion. Pray leave me be, to follow mine. I have no doubt that I will arrive, as well or better than you. As to your Wicket Gate, that is far away. Nor do I wish to hear your reasons for why I, should have a Wicket Gate encounter. Keep, I beseech you, your opinions to yourselves, and I shall keep mine to myself. The verdant path to where we are, was good enough for me."

Quietly Christian said to Hopeful: "Methinks that fools who know themselves to be fools, are wiser than fools who believe themselves to be wise. Is it not said, that fools make it clear to everyone except themselves, just what they are? Well, should we walk without him for a while, in hope that he shall reflect on my words? Or walk with him for a while, in hope that fresh words might get through?"

Hopeful suggested that since too much too soon, might be more than Ignorance could take, then they should give him space to reflect on what had been spoken. Yet that they speak with him again, for, he

said, "our counsel is for the saving of his own soul. Yet not even the king will force his company on any."

As they walked on, Ignorance lingering far behind, they came across a very dark lane where paths met. There they saw a man bound by seven creatures of darkness, being dragged back towards the byway to hell in the mountainside. There, it did seem, he would suffer within, a cave easier in than out.

And the pilgrims did tremble at such damnation, and Christian thought that the man's face—which being hung down for shame, was hard to see—might possibly be that of Turn-away, who came from the town of Apostasy. Indeed that was like enough, for a paper tied to his back, proclaimed him to be one who had turned from the prince, and to apostasy.

Chapter 38

The Tribulation of Little-faith

Then I saw in my dream, that thinking of Turn-away, reminded Christian of a story he had heard about a good man named Little-faith. Little-faith had dwelt in the nearby town of Sincere. It had been, perhaps, this very place, where Dead-man's Lane, which came from Broadway Gate, crossed the highway—and the way was dark. This place had, according to the shepherds, a reputation for molestation and murder. "Tell me this tale," said Hopeful, "and pray that we shall not meet such miscreants, unless they will not much like our ash sticks."

Then said Christian: "It chanced that Little-faith was full-minded to be a pilgrim, but coming tired to this place, did sit and rest and sleep. From Broadway Gate there came three brothers grim. Their names were Faint-heart, Distrust, and Guilt. And they beheld Little-faith fast asleep, and ripe for an easy picking. Yet they rushed and rattled towards their victim, awaking him, but without chance to escape. And they warned him in violent terms, to stay where he was. The poor man looked as white as a clout, for he was not in faith a fighting man.

"Then with divers threats, Faint-heart tested what little strength and courage Little-faith had, leaving him timid and weak, then he demanded his wallet. At first, Little-

faith did not obey, for it was needed money. Then did Distrust get angry, and overpowering him, thrust hand into pocket, and drew forth a wallet. At which point Little-faith distrusted his own trust and confidence in himself, and in his pilgrimage. And he called out, in little hope of any rescue. But to silence him, Guilt began to club him, to his shame and dishonour.

"And Little-faith soon lay with battered and bleeding head, fearing that he would soon die. And they mocked him, until they heard voices on the road. Then they feared lest Sir Great-grace, a matchless fighter from the city of Good-confidence, might chance upon them as a second Samson. Quickly they took to their heels in flight. In time, Little-faith, who had still not found his voice, managed to crawl from the shrubs where he had been cast, and in time recovered enough strength to continue on his way—though he now walked with a limp."

Hopeful asked whether Little-faith was then penniless, and Christian replied, nay.

"For his cash they took in greater part, but they did not discover his jewels of great price. But Little-faith still wept at his loss, which would make his journey the harder. Thus he was forced to beg as he went, spending his loose coins only in dire need, where goods would not be given him. And oft he went hungry."

Hopeful asked if they stole his scroll—he knew that Christian placed much value in such, and Christian replied, nay.

"Such are things of great value to pilgrims, yet worthless to any others, since they bear the pilgrim's name, being given by the personal grace of the prince. Yet had he been

given such, as I think that he had, then perhaps by grace they found it not, and so stole it not from him."

Hopeful asked whether keeping his jewels was also a comfort to him, and Christian replied both yea and nay.

"Yea, because such made of him a rich man, and was given by grace. Nay, in that he failed to enjoy his riches, for the most part, and wallowed rather in poverty of soul. Thus in his sorrow, he long forgot his treasure. Howbeit at the last, he came to remember it, and his spirits were lifted. But then he feared lest robbers again should lay him low, in hope that he had riches still about his body.

"It was a grief to the mind. Who knows whether you or I would fare any better, were we victims of such injustice, in spite of all that we have already faced. I stand amazed that he did not die of his grief. And he walked as one who had bitter complaints over rough treatment. He told his bitter story to all who would listen."

Hopeful asked should not the man have sold his jewels, once he remembered them, in order not to beg. Christian said nay, disparagingly.

"Are you so hopeless of understanding? Cannot you see? Why, even were these jewels in his hands, yet they were such jewels as none roundabouts would care for, though they have them not, nor could afford them. Nor, had he been able to sell them, could he have been helped in spirit by the goods or coins of those living thereabouts.

"Yet the treasure he had, was not about his person. Nay, it was stored up in heaven, untouchable by mortal hand, an inheritance incorruptible. Given to him in very truth, but even as a gift is given into a person's account, from which in this world, they may but draw an interest to feed

their deeper needs. But is it not a blessing now, to know that great blessing awaits?

"But the heavenly cannot be traded for the earthly, even as the earthly cannot be traded for the heavenly."

Chapter 39

Be Not Overly Hard

Then I saw in my dream, that Hopeful felt rather vexed by Christian's tone. "I spoke as one who thought you had spoken of an earthly treasure, though treasure indeed comes in various forms. To Esau, it was his birthright, though he traded that for a pittance. I but wondered whether Little-faith had such treasure in an earthen vessel, which could be traded for earthen goods."

"Forgive my tone, my brother, I beg you", said Christian. "But as for Esau, whom you mention, there stands a great gulf betwixt him and Little-faith. And that not least because the one was before Sinai, and the other after. Esau's treasure was by old birth; Little-faith's by new birth. Esau's belly, as a carnal man, led to his loss; not so for Little-faith, a man of the spiritual. Esau treated his birthright as worthless; Little-faith treated his birthright as priceless. Much more could be said. Esau's heart was on this world; Little-faith's heart was above this world. Thus it did anger me that you should think that Little-faith should, had his jewels been sellable, have sold his birthright for a morsel of meat."

Hopeful acknowledged his error of judgement, yet confessed that Christian's tone of voice had irked him. "But Christian, the thieves were surely cowards, to attack

one weaker than themselves, and then to run at voices in the distance. Should not Little-faith have shown more pluck, and given at least some blow, to see where he stood?"

Christian agreed that they were cowards, but said that that was only seeable with hindsight. So how was Little-faith, with only midsight and foresight, to know? "And he had but little-heart, whereas you, my brother, would I deem push first, then yield if pushed back—or so say your words. Yet words are easier said than done, and if you, or I, saw them near, who are now at safe distance, second thoughts might perhaps prevail.

"Moreover, that even as we as pilgrims may call upon our prince for help—which sometimes is given, sometimes not—so may these travelling thieves, call upon their dark prince for help—which is sometimes given. We have both grievously suffered in some ways, but of us twain I alone have fought Apollyon, champion of Be'elzebub, whose very voice was like a roaring lion's. And I, though battle clad and girt with bright sword, was hard pressed. And my mind was beset by faint heart, distrust, and guilt. Only by great grace did I win that battle. But let none pooh-pooh the enemy, who him has not fought."

Then said Hopeful: "Yet they ran away at the very thought of Sir Great-grace."

And Christian replied that that was true, and had often been the case, from what he had heard. "But you are too hard on Little-faith. Great-grace is the king's champion hereabouts, set to help protect his highway. But Little-faith is hardly to be compared. Not all the king's subjects are champions, I deem, even as not all parts of the body are arms. Even David, though old enough to use a sling

to slay a giant, if younger would have died by giant sword. Does a wren have the strength of an ox, or a mouse fly as high as a hawk? Little-faith is but of those who are weak in arms and in faith, yet have faith. By grace he was saved."

Then said Hopeful: "Yet I wish that Sir Great-grace had turned up, to thrash them sore."

And Christian replied that had he turned up, it might have been him who was thrashed, for even the mighty may fall. "He is a bonny fighter, and would win unless they managed to get in under his guard. Why, that close, any one of them might have tripped him up, and once down he could have been out. I have heard that he has battle scars, even upon his face, and has despaired of life more than once in long fight. Many champions of old have been hard put to, and some have fallen, and the mighty singer Heman lay as dead.[6]

"And if these three alone might have overcome Great-grace, what if he had fought champions of the evil one? Consider Leviathan. Surely a might foe. He scoffs at spears and swords; iron and bronze are as deadly as rotten wood or straw; arrows and sling stones are but as thrown grass; clubs as but stubble.

"Perhaps with Job's horse, we might defeat Job's foe. For his horse has power, and his neck is clothed with lightning. He can leap like a locust, and his majestic snorts can strike terror like thunder. He paws the ground in the valley, secure in his strength, and charges to meet his enemies. He laughs at danger. He fears no evil. He

6 Of all the lament psalms, only Ps.88 (Heman's) ends without hope.

retreats not from the sword. A quiver of arrows rattles against his hide, a flashing sword, a glittering spear. Excited and quivering, he tears up the ground in his haste. When he hears the sound of the horn, he does not hold back. He will not wait a while when the trumpet sounds, when he smells that battle is afoot, when he hears the war cry.

"And yet, we are without horse and are but footmen. We should be slow to seek to fight against the captains of the enemy, and slow to condemn those who name our prince, yet have fallen in battle, or fallen in failure, or turned in fear. Let us not boast in our untested strength, nor seek to be tested. Consider that sturdy fisherman who, dismissing all others as cowards, turned tail before a wee slip of a servant lass, and crawled away into grief."

Chapter 40

Net and Whip

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian took stock of the situation. “Let us not venture this perilous path in presumption, relying on our own strength”, said he. “Let us walk as those who trust rather to the protection and protectors under the king.

“As to the first, let us heed not just the protection of attack, but the protection of defence also. For instance, bearing faith as a shield. For though the sting of the sword bites not the hide of Leviathan, the shield of faith withstands even the fiery arrows of Be’elzebub.

“As to the second, we walk best in trust with an able protector. For we should rely not fully on shield and sword of our might. Nay, we should call upon the king himself, to be our ever-present help in time of trouble, even to provide a helper in need, whether seen or unseen.

“Consider the mighty warrior, David. When he walked in the Valley of the Dark Shadow, did he not walk as a sheep following its shepherd, and not as a warrior marching to war? And Yahweh his king was even his shield, his glory, and the lifter of his head, who could easily protect him from ten thousand times ten thousand foes.

“And consider matchless Moses, peerless leader of scores of thousands, who said unto his king: ‘Yea, you have said

that you know me and are pleased with me. Now, if you are pleased with me, please show me your plans for me, that I may serve you and continue to please you.' Even he would rather stay where his was, than travel without his king to lead. For where the king does lead, the bodies of his enemies will be buried under the slain.

"I have been tested. By grace I have been spared. By grace I would rather be spared from being tested again. Though I fancy, we will yet again face foes. Still, since neither bear nor lion have devoured us yet, may the king keep us safe even from the uncircumcised."[7] Then sang Christian: "Of little faith, in life you may be beat; And knocked around, your faith will feel the heat. But gain more faith, then you shall victor be; If with your king, are steadfast in glory."

And so they walked, not trusting in themselves. Ignorance trailed ever further behind. Soon they came to a Y-shape in the road. Should they take the path to the left, or to the right? For both roads looked to be as straight and narrow, as two peas in a pod.

As they stayed there, pondering the puzzle, a man, seemingly, as black as coal and wearing a pure white coat, asked where they were headed. To him they replied that they were headed to Celestial City, and enquired of him whether he knew the way.

"Follow me," said he, "for I know the way. Indeed, I needed not to ask for your destination, for the light of your countenances does show that you are followers of virtue, and seekers of fair virtue. And what nobler quest

7 *Uncircumcised* here means any not in covenant with the king.

is to be had, than going to the king? Well indeed shall your fate be, and without further trouble you shall receive your just rewards, highly honoured of the king."

But after a little while, the road slowly turned away from the City, so that at length they could not see it. And yet notwithstanding, they followed their kindly guide. And then, most unexpectedly, a trap was sprung, and they found themselves to be entrapped in nets, entangled to their necks. And the white robe fell off from their guide, and they saw that he had deceived them sore. And there they lay, helpless and struggling, left to starve and to rot.

Said Christian to Hopeful: "Yet again my choice was wrong, and I did not heed the shepherd's warning to beware of Flatterer. Has not flattery spread a broad net for the feet, which might ensnare flattered or flatterer?"

Said Hopeful to Christian: "And we had forgotten, that they gave us also a map of the way, wherein we could have found the way aright."

Long they lamented their folly and their plight. At last, one of the shining ones—sent out to serve pilgrims—ventured their way. He asked them how they had become ensnared. They told him that they had sought the right way to Mount Zion, and had followed a stranger the wrong way, a wolf in shepherd's clothing, and they recounted his words. Then the shining one said that their foe had indeed been Flatterer, a false servant who pretended to serve their prince.

The shining one then released them, and took them back down the false trail, that he might set their feet upon the right track. Then he asked whether they had

slept in the Delectable Mountains, and met the shepherds. And they answered, yes. "Did one give unto you a map of the way?" And they answered, yes. "Did you not look to the map, before being led astray?" And they answered, no. "Did you not have it in mind?" And they answered, no. "Did the shepherds then not warn you against Flatterer, who could by flattery and fancy talk, seduce innocent hearts?" And they answered, yes, adding, "Yet we really did not think that one so fine spoken, could be evil."

Then he ordered them to stand by a tree, and he whipped them smartly *in loco parentis*, saying that even so might a loving parent discipline a beloved child of theirs, to help them to learn from their folly and to be wise. For a tuppence worth of lesson now, in love, beats a wagonload of lesson later, in hate. And would they rather not have the whip, than the net?

That painful duty done, he blessed them further, and sent them on their way. Their skin would be healed, their souls would be tougher, and their spirits would be wiser. To him who had saved them and chastened them, they gave thanks.

Then they softly hummed this song: "Though shepherd warned, our ears him did not heed; Though shepherd showed, our eyes saw not the need. Then led astray, fast bound in net we kicked; By helping hand, we were set free yet whipped. Now chastened sore, back on the road we walk; Of foolish hearts, and wisdom learned we talk."

Chapter 41

Mr. Atheist Heads East

Then I saw in my dream, that a long way away there was an old man walking east. Christian saw him, then he and Hopeful prepared themselves, lest he be like Mr. Flatterer. When he got within hail, he announced himself as Mr. Atheist, and laughed that they, as simpletons and shepherdless sheep, were wasting their time in heading west.

Christian was somewhat shaken. "Do you believe that we will not be received at Celestial City?" he asked.

Atheist laughed again. "Ah received, ask you? Man, there is nothing there to receive or reject you, save in your dreams. I have walked worldwide, and not found what you call heaven."

"But," said Christian, "heaven is beyond this world, so cannot be found in it. Have you not searched for what is, where it is not?"

"Ah once upon a time," said Atheist, tugging his long beard, "I heard as have you, and believed as do you. Weary years I spent in my search, but am no nearer to finding such. Therefore I believe that such cannot be.

"Ah the follies of youth, that as a stripling I heeded that call—which no doubt was merely my imagining—and set

forth to find that which no doubt was only within me. And I should know, for I have travelled further than you, and have seen neither god, ghost, nor giant. Now I head back, to hopefully resume my former life a sadder but wiser man, given up on a wild goose chase which has no goose." And he laughed at them again.

As if abashed, Christian asked Hopeful as to whether Mr. Atheist might be right. And Atheist stood by, and smirked. "Take heed," said Hopeful, "not to his words, but to whether he is of like mind to Flatterer. For surely he does flatter himself, as having awoken from a sweet dream. Yet he is heading back to a dearthly dream, a fool wrapped up in folly. He seeks to flatter us to become as wise as he, though as pupils to master, and thus to affirm him on his way away. Yet his wisdom is the king's folly.

"Should we, who have learned a bitter lesson, have to learn it again, or fail the test, as has he who returns? Did we not see Mount Zion, we who stood with the shepherds? Are we not to walk with faith, as with a shield—as you have said—relying not on sight alone? Did a wise king not once say to son: 'If you heed no longer your lessons, in error you will be led forth from understanding'? Let us not be as they who turn back to Destruction. Therefore, let us go on."

And Christian smiled: "I asked but to test your mind, my brother, and not in doubt. As to this man, he has but seen the idol of this world and been blinded, as mortals who gaze upon it are. Thus, much we see, he cannot, and concludes that they therefore are not. We have the truth, and there is no lie within."

West went they, and Mr. Atheist laughed and left.

Chapter 42

A Voice of Hope

Then I saw in my dream, that they came to a gentle hill of dreams. There the warm east wind among the whispering willows and budding beeches, made them decidedly drowsy alongside a gentle babbling brook. And Hopeful said: "This is a pleasant balm. Let us draw aside and rest awhile, for sleep beckons to me as a sweet siren." Already his eyes had become dull and heavy, and his legs longed to slumber awhile.

But the unusual quietness of wood and wind, made Christian wary. Struggling against sleep, he said: "We must not take a nap now, my friend. For I fear lest we not awake from it." But Hopeful protested that sleep was ever the traveller's friend, refreshment to the weary. But said Christian: "Remember the shepherd's warning, not to sleep on Enchanted Ground, a place of deadly slumber. Did he not mean that those who belong to the day, should not sleep in the day, as if those who belong to the night? Though sleep beckons us as a choice wine, we must stay sober and walk in the light."

Said Hopeful, as one who reluctantly spurns slumber: "You are in the right, as I was in the wrong. But had I come here alone, I fear that I would have soon drifted into forgetfulness. Truly it has been said, that two are

better than one. For if one stumbles, the other may help them up. May the king reward your wisdom."

And to counter the spell of the wood, they decided to keep talking. But first, Christian thought to sing this song: "A saint alone, might sleep along the way; But one with one, less chance to go astray. Reason they share, why on the road they be; So neither sleep, when they should walk happy. For good it is, to hear how saint became; The king be praised, by those who fear his name."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "When did you look to change?"

And Hopeful said: "Do you mean, to care for my own soul?" And Christian answered yea. "Well," said Hopeful, "long I continued in the ways of Vanity Fair, which things did drown me in perdition and destruction. For those who seek the treasure that is below, can below that treasure be buried deep. In the ways of the world, I was well versed. As to running riot, debauchery, unseemly speech, untruthful speech, unclean living, and whatnot, my soul was laid low. But it was but what all others around me did. Then Faithful and you, came to our town. We then had sight of another way of life, and heard that our vanities were but death unto death, and warranted the wrath of the king."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "When did you elect to change?"

And Hopeful said: "Not straightway, for I did not wish to consider my sin, nor my damnation, and did shut my eyes to truth. For these reasons.

"Firstly, I did not know conviction of sin to be by the king's voice. Secondly, I did not wish to depart from the charm of sin. Thirdly, I did not wish to depart from my

friends who were of like mind. Fourthly, I did not like to be convicted of sin, so wished to quieten the voice. Yet once stirred that voice spoke ever louder."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "What brought forth the voice?"

And Hopeful said: "Many things. For many started to think and to seek. The voice spoke, if I met any good; or heard the Book; or if I felt unwell, or heard of any being unwell or having died, whether expectedly or unexpectedly; or thought of having to die, or of judgement after death."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "Did you find easy relief from the voice?"

And Hopeful said: "No, try as I might, it but made the voice the louder. If I thought to hide in unwelcome sin, a double torment I would be in. Then I thought to hide in unwelcome righteousness, lest I die in welcome unrighteousness and be damned."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And did righteousness hide you from the voice?"

And Hopeful said: "Yes, for a while. For good noise can outclamour bad noise. By dint of will I died to my sins. I tried to be religious in the ways of the king, to read from the Book, and bewailing my past sins betook myself to prayer, to honest dealings with neighbours, and to more besides. Yet the voice demanded deeper, not wider."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And why did you die deeper?"

And Hopeful said: "Because the voice still spoke unto me, and at last I surrendered. For it spoke of my best self-righteousness, as still unclean. It told me that, because I

could never be perfect in obedience to the good, I could never by the good be perfect. Therefore, said the voice, I could never fully please the prince of the dominions, by striving in part to be good. I further thought that, if one is in debt, though they begin to pay on the nail, their debt still remains unpaid. And was I not in debt to the prince? I could not repay. Could he forgive?"

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And how did you apply that thought?"

And Hopeful said: "I thought it as if, having sinned against the prince—though I lived in his dominions—turning over a new leaf was but at best, an imperfect leaf. And besides, it was still that I could not repay the debt I owed him, of loyalty where I had given disloyalty. Did I not live therefore under his just damnation? And yet, why did the voice speak to me, if not to offer hope? Indeed I was moreover troubled that, though naysaying old sins, I did yeasay new ones, as new weeds among the new wheat. Hopeless was I."

Chapter 43

When Did the Chicken Hatch?

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian asked Hopeful what he did, as one hopeless but tempted to hope.

Said Hopeful: "I did not know what to do. Then I spoke with Faithful in his solitude. He told me that I had hope, if only I could but become as righteous as one who had never sinned. In former days, I would have thought that I could become righteous enough to please the prince. Now I saw that what Faithful said was a true saying, though it seemed to condemn me."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And did you think that any could be so righteous?"

Said Hopeful: "As we talked, I began to see that maybe one man indeed, had such righteousness."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And did you ask who such a man was, and whether he could help you?"

Said Hopeful: "As we talked, Faithful told me that the king's son himself, became the mortal prince of these dominions. But the wonder was, that he remained the immortal prince of the City, unable to die except outside of the City gate. Faithful said it was somewhat like how the sun remains the sun in the sky, yet its rays can walk upon the earth outside of the sun. Or like how an author

can write themself into a story, so walk in the story, and can there come to grief within the story, who otherwise is safe outside the story. Such mysteries are, however, beyond my mind, but confirmed in the Book.

"As prince in the mortal lands, he came without sin, and lived without sin, living perfectly what the true law required to please the king. But his flawlessness displeased many, and they, seeking to dispose of him, nailed him to a tree as one accursed. And yet the heavenly guide was with him, and raised him back to life after three days.

"But his death had been the plan between himself, the king, and the heavenly guide. And—it is pictured in a number of ways, since no one picture can fully show how it worked—it was like his willing death allowed him to confer his righteousness. But only on whosoever chose to wear it within and without: to welcome the prince, was to welcome his righteousness. But, said I, he would surely not welcome my company."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And how did Faithful reply?"

Said Hopeful: "He said that presumption is all well and good, if it is the right presumption. And here it should be of welcome, not of unwelcome. For, he said, all were invited to dwell with the prince. And he showed me wherein it stood written and would stand within this age, as firm or firmer, than heaven and earth.

"I asked, how then could I accept the invitation of the prince? He said that there was no hard and fast way to do so, for it was as fluid as the heart. However, since I was at a loss of how to express my heart, he suggested that I ask upon my knees, as a humble supplicant before a throne

of mercy. For although pardon was the prince's to give, he encouraged penitents to ask the king. For, he said, he wished all to see his father the king to be the prime giver, not he himself.

"Thus did I address myself, beseeching the king not yet as my father, both for his pardon, and for his welcome into the dominions of his son. Moreover, as I had read in the Book, I dared ask the king that I, sinner as I was, might become as a princely son, even a brother to the prince. For I would share his righteousness, and walk the world as a pilgrim. And I dared to presume that he heard and would answer. So I thanked him."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "Did you hear his voice, then?"

Said Hopeful: "He spoke not again at that time. And I was tempted to doubt of my welcome. I wept and wept again, and begged and begged again, till my knees were sore and my throat parched. I would stand and stretch, drink, then kneel again."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And what did you do then?"

Said Hopeful: "I was at a loss, as one who finally dives into a pool, and yet meets not the water, but hangs in the air midway. I kept asking myself, should I pray some more, or not at all?"

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And why did you not give up?"

Said Hopeful: "Because only in the pool would I have the favour of the prince, who died that we might live. He alone had the words of eternal life, so other words were vain. Would it not be better, were I to die, to die walking towards, than walking away? Moreover, it came to me

that I should await the king's good pleasure. For if he promised to give to those who asked, should we not abide his timing? Moreover, I thought that maybe I was not ready to receive, what was ready to be given."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "And how was it given?"

Said Hopeful: "Not with the eye of flesh, but with the eye of the spirit, did I see the gift given, when I was ready to understand. And yet, maybe it was given upon the asking, and yet the waiting was to gain the assurance of the gift given. However, sadness had settled upon me, for I had seen the more sure, the vileness of my sin, which disfigured my person—though to the eye of flesh I looked but fresh.

"And again, amazed that grace would stoop so low, I asked myself whether I was wrong to ask it to stoop so low, and whether it was better I was unwelcomed by grace, and welcomed by hell. But as I walked along Damascus Way, I heard the prince say unto my soul, that all who welcome him are saved in mortal life.

"Yet I said unto him: 'Depart from me, lord, for I am a wicked man.' But he said that his grace was sufficient to make of me a good pilgrim and brother, of whom he would sing glad songs. Moreover, I understood that to ask him to give me unwelcome, was to ask him to lie, for he had promised to give welcome to all who asked.

"And moreover, I saw a bloodstained and barren cross. And I stood and wept. And I heard him say that he came into the world to save sinners, and is the end of mere laws without, to those who enter within. And I saw that a covenant now stood, between pilgrims and the king as their heavenly father, with the prince as mediator. And

that his death had made intercession for us, in his father's will. All this I heard and saw, and much more.

"Then I saw that my disbelief had held back my belief. And I did welcome the prince, and trust through his work to have the forgiveness of welcome, and to be in truth a pilgrim, justified in his sight, and beloved by his father, my father. And I wept now in inexpressible gratitude, with tears which were a fountain from deep within."

Then Christian asked Hopeful: "How did it affect your spirit?"

Hopeful replied: "With new eyes, I could truly see that the whole world flounders woefully in unrighteousness, condemned by wholeness, as morally unwholesome. And that only by surrender, could the road to righteousness be found. For it covers like a robe, then within the robe transforms by a spirit of holiness planted within. Even so is a house is built by foundation and shell, then slowly within becomes a home. Moreover, a love for holiness, planted as a seed, then buds and grows, disdaining the former life as but weed. And the heart warms, even unto death, to him who made new life and love attainable."

Chapter 44

The Witness of Fallen Nature

Then I saw in my dream, that Hopeful saw Ignorance keeping his distance. Obviously he did not like their company. “But,” said Hopeful, “it would be better for him to travel with us.”

“I agree with you,” replied Christian, “but I doubt that he does.”

“I am sure that you are right,” said Hopeful, “but should we not wait a while, giving him a chance to catch up?” And so they did. And so, begrudgingly, he caught up.

“Come man, why do you not travel with us?” asked Christian. Ignorance replied that he preferred his own company, unless with likeminded people. “Be that as it may, may we not, as fellow travellers, converse in friendly fashion, so as to pass the time in this lonely place? Since we walk the king’s highway, tell me, please, how stands it between you and the king?”

And Ignorance said: “Well enough, I hope. For I am full of good thoughts, which comfort me.” When Christian asked what his thoughts were about, he replied: “The king and his city.”

“But,” said Christian, “even his enemies have such thoughts.”

"True," said Ignorance, "but I desire them; they do not."

"But," said Christian, "even sluggards think and desire, yet they get not their desires."

"True," said Ignorance, "I desire them, and have forsaken all for them."

"On that I have my doubts", said Christian. "Forsaking all, is harder than many imagine. Why do you believe that you have done so?" Ignorance replied that his heart bore him witness. Christian replied that to follow one's own heart, can mislead.

When Ignorance replied that his heart was a good one, so was trustworthy, Christian asked him how he could be sure that it was good. "Because," said Ignorance, "it assures me of heaven."

"Yet a bad heart might give false assurance", said Christian. When Ignorance replied that his heart and life spoke as one, each affirming the other, Christian asked how he could be sure that both spoke as one.

When Ignorance replied that his heart told him so, Christian asked him how such witness should be tested. A petty thief might be justified by their heart, but not by those thieved. Should life not be judged by the Book, since the heart is prone to justify sin? "But," said Ignorance, "a bad heart will only have bad thoughts, and a good heart will only have good thoughts. And is not a good life, proof of living by the Book?"

"Yea, a good heart will think good thoughts, and a good life is some evidence of living by the Book and the Book living within", said Christian. "But," he added, "having them, and only thinking you have them, are two different things." When Ignorance asked what Christian deemed

to be good thoughts, and good life, Christian replied that many good thoughts existed, about ourselves, about the king, about the prince, and so forth.

When Ignorance asked what good thoughts we might have about ourselves, Christian replied that they would be in line with the Book. "In what ways," asked Ignorance, "would they be in line?"

"Well, for example, when we agree with its judgement of us", said Christian. "It does for instance, say that of our fallen nature we are not righteous, nor do good as we should. It says also that of our fallen nature our thoughts are prone to evil even from our youth. So, good thoughts will think of our fallenness when fallen, for that is in line with the Book."

When Ignorance replied that he would never adjudge himself ever fallen, Christian replied that he feared that Ignorance had never had the good thought to walk the king's highway the king's way with the king's help. And that only when both heart and life agreed with the Book, would both heart and life be good.

When Ignorance asked him to be more clear, Christian replied that the Book condemned the fallen ways of the fallen, for such ways were crooked and but followed the fallen heart of the fallen. When the fallen see that their ways are crooked, then at least their thoughts are good, since being in line with the good. Similarly, for the ill to see themselves to be ill, is in line with health, being a healthy thought.

Chapter 45

When Ignorance Isn't Bliss

Then I saw in my dream, that when Ignorance asked what good thoughts one might have about the king and his son, Christian replied that these too would be in line with the Book. And that might be about their attributes and being—weighty matters indeed. Or that might be about how they relate with regards to man—important matters indeed. Such thoughts would consider that the royal house knows us, better than we know ourselves; that it can see sins within us, which we cannot see; that the king knows always, our inner thoughts and heart; and that our least of sins, are but anathema to the prince. "Do you label me but a fool," asked Ignorance, "as not to think that they can see deeper and wider than I, or that I should presume to ever please them?"

"Then," asked Christian, "what think you of these things?" When Ignorance replied that he must believe in the prince, in order to be justified, Christian asked why he should believe in him, when he did not seem to need him, and seemed to feel self-justified. "For I think you do not see, that what you have been and are, has been and is at fault, before the king."

When Ignorance replied that he believed, notwithstanding, Christian asked in what way did he 'believe'. "I believe that the prince died for sinners, and my justification before his father will be based upon my obedience to his laws. I believe that the prince makes good any defects in my religious duties unto the king, and so I will be proclaimed righteous", replied Ignorance. "For none of us are perfect."

"Yet in your justification you condemn yourself!" exclaimed Christian. "Such fantastical faith has no basis in the Book. Your belief is a false faith, moreover, for it places some justification from what you deem to be your merit, and thinks it takes the little extra it thinks you need, from the prince, which it cannot.

"Such partial faith believes that, in the lesser part, the prince justifies persons in spite of their sinful actions and nature, and in the greater part, justifies persons for their righteous actions.[8]

"Such deceitful faith will leave you unjustified before the king. The faith of Mr. Pharisee refused to beg as a beggar, and therefore he did starve. The faith of Mr. Publican found that beggars who kneel and beg before the king, will be fed and exalted bounteously by grace—for underserved righteousness covers our needs, and raises us upwards. Your faith denies—against the Book—that by the law we cannot find favour with the king, and that the prince died to fully provide unmerited favour. Yet

8 This, incidentally, is parallel with Islam, where personal deeds should outweigh personal bad deeds, and Muslims should still hope for Mohammed's merits before the judgement of Allah/God. Merit plus supplement.

only if we accept his favour, will the king look on us, as being as righteous as the righteous prince. And nothing less will save."

"What!" exclaimed Ignorance. "Would you have us obtain full righteousness by pure gift, and so be free to live riotous lives, as if there was no law? Would you have sin abound?"

"Ignorance in name, ignorant in nature, is what you are, and ignorant of it", replied Christian. "Ignorant, moreover, to think that grace increases sin. For the general effect of saving grace, of imputed righteousness, is to impart righteousness into the soul, so that the fruit of righteousness grows from the seed of righteousness, a better seed than that which Adam did plant. This virtue responds to justification, rather than seeks justification; it goes not before, but follows. And they who see the love of the City, are more like to love as the City loves, and to walk its ways by its power, which alone overcomes sin's power."

Then Hopeful asked Ignorance: "Have you met the prince?"

And Ignorance replied: "What! You imagine that mere mortal can meet the immortal one? You and your bunch suffer methinks from a strong delusion, and I for one will not swallow such a camel."

Then Hopeful said to Ignorance: "Do you not see that the king can indeed reveal the prince without, by special revelation, and that his special agent can reveal him within, by assurance?"

And Ignorance replied: "You might believe that, but I do not nor ever will. And my faith is as good as, or better

than, yours, though I do not have as many nags as your heads contain."

Then Christian said to Ignorance: "By your leave. You really should not speak so slightingly of such matters. No one can know the prince except through revelation, but such revelation is possible to those whose hearts are open to it. Of such faith, I fear you are in ignorance, even as to the need for it. You should take up the Book, read it, and put on the garments of the prince. You should awaken to your neediness, and to the great supplier of the needy. For first see your slavery, then see your liberty."

And Ignorance replied: "You talk too quickly for my ears, and you walk too quickly for my legs. Pray, let me not detain or incommode you in any way. Walk on at your pace, and I shall walk on again at mine."

And not been given to force their company on any, they let him be, and walked on. Yet they were sorry for him. For he chose to remain in his ignorance, rather than to be wise; to sleep on, rather than to awake. Yet they hoped that one day, he would wise up, and a new and better name receive.

Chapter 46

Is the Prince Just For Christmas?

Then I saw in my dream, that Ignorance hobbled behind at a good distance. Christian said unto Hopeful: "We must walk without company, for though we would have chosen him, he would not choose us."

"Sadly," said Hopeful, "I knew many in Vanity Fair, just like Ignorance. Some families were painfully divided, where some gave up that condition to become pilgrims."

And they spoke of how Be'elzebub, who claimed the debateable lands, was as an idol which blinded his subjects. Was it possible that such people never really asked whether they could see, never really felt any conviction of sin and fear of judgement? Christian thought that though they might, instead of following pain to a doctor they denied the pain so as to deny the doctor, and healed themselves in vain imagination.

Hopeful reflected that fear itself is as a pain, and can be good or bad fear. Christian agreed that good fear, especially of Yahweh the king, was the beginning of true knowledge and wisdom. Such good fear, sparked off conviction of sin and led to conversion; inspired pilgrims to stay true to the king's highway; turned off neither left nor right; and engendered a loving

reverence for the king, for his book, and for those of the royal city.

At that point, they realised that while an hour's walk would see them clear of the Enchanted Ground, its danger had been turned to blessing. For much joy and understanding had they had in communion. And they continued to converse, considering how the ignorant seek to stifle the pain of conviction.

"It seems to me," said Christian, "that some say that the fears from the king, are rather from Be'elzebub, in the sense of hurting their feelings and offending their sensibilities. Thus, in dismissing heavenly virtue, they can feel worldly virtue, boasting in their wisdom. They can also feel that such convictions go against true faith, though theirs is a false faith in their seeming virtue. And so they harden themselves against virtue of substance. They can also fear that fear is always an enemy, so feel victorious over godly fear, and bold in their freedom from such fear. They can also fear that godly fear can rob them, like a thief in the night, of their vanities of self-holiness, and they cast out the thief which would steal delusion."

"In saying such, you speak of the man I was", said Hopeful.

"But not of the man you are", said Christian. "But come, let us speak of more profitable things. I have in mind the sad story of Mr. Temporary, whom you might have heard of, and from whom we can learn. He had some show of true religion."

"I knew him well," said Hopeful, "for at one time I lived but an hour away. He dwelt in Graceless, less than an hour's walk from Honesty, and old Mr. Turn-back lived next door in the terrace."

"Well one Christmas," said Christian, "Mr. Temporary did awaken, for he felt his sins at last. For he heard how much he would be paid for them by the evil prince, and how much had been paid by the good prince to take them away."

"That must have been the time," said Hopeful, "when he began to visit me. For I had recently returned for the season of goodwill, bearing gifts from Vanity Fair for friends and relatives. Till then, Mr. Temporary and I had only met briefly in the streets. Then he came to me in tears, much moved by his sins. I could pity him, but could offer him no hope."

"Well," said Christian, "just after he told me—for my sins weighed me down too—that he had resolved to labour night and day to be a pilgrim, he met old Self-save. And then he did relent, and became as a stranger to me. Our prince was soon forgotten."

"Yes," said Hopeful, "for I know somewhat of that. For with the turn of the New Year, he came no more unto me. And meeting him in the streets, he seemed to have gotten over his tears and his fears. And I thought him blessed. Now I think otherwise. Now it seems to me that he backslid from conviction, to his loss."

Chapter 47

The Whys and Hows of Backsliding

Then I saw in my dream, that Hopeful suggested four reasons why Mr. Temporary and others like him, have turned back.

"Firstly, that their conviction was but from, and not to to. That is, they heard the voice of fear, but not of love. We can fear our guilt, without change of mind or of heart. And when the power of fear wanes, running from it, wanes also. Is it not that a dog that feels sickness, does empty its stomach of that which offends? Yet when its stomach is no longer offended, does it not take back that which offended it?

"Similarly, I think that they sought a new prince, not for love of the new prince, but only from fear of the old. I do not say that many who do likewise, do not grow to love the prince of glory, or from that love cannot turn away. I say only that before coming to love, the dislike of the old prince and his wages, can cool. And I suspect that old Self-save would have said to Temporary, that wiser heads should prevail. And without love for the prince, allegiance to him—at best a weak allegiance—wanes. For a friend only in need, is indeed no friend.

"Secondly, that the fear of departing, can outmaster the fear of remaining. And with the waning of the latter, can

come the waxing of the former. For those around affect our judgments. Is it not easier to row with the flow, and more pleasurable to do so? Once the flames of hell seem to die down, it seems good to settle back into old ways. For we would neither lose the world as a friend, nor gain it as an enemy.

"Thirdly, the religion of the cross is but shameful to them. They see it not as securing their salvation, but as shaming their sin. And that offends their pride, and they look down on religion, instead of looking up to it. And they turn away from that which offends their self-esteem. From heaven, the world offers to save.

"Fourthly, their taste of guilt was distasteful to them, and on second thoughts, they feel that it is best done without. For who delights in their weakness, and would rather not boast in their strength? Is it not, as you have said, that we prefer to deny our sickness, than to see a doctor? Thus they harden their hearts."

Christian agreed that such reasons were likely enough to have swayed Temporary, who he agreed had probably not had a real heart and mind, a root and branch, conversion. A thief in the dock might well shake and quake before their judge. They might plead innocence or promise repentance. Yet, guilty and unrepentant, they merely seek to escape their fear of punishment. And if released, will they not return to their thievery? Yet that same villain, if only caught by grace, would a good judge make, and thieve no more.

"It seems to me," said Christian, "that the steps from heaven back to the world, can be many and small. One step is to take your mind away from the king, from death, and from what is beyond.

"Another, is to bit by bit, back out of the personal practice of true religion, putting aside prayer both petitionary and devotional, forgetting both to curb sinful lusts, and to reflect on sinfulness.

"Another, is to bit by bit, back away from feasting on fellowship between the fervent among both pilgrims and seekers.

"Another, is to bit by bit, drift away from public acts, both of worship, and of readings from the Book—of righteous identification.

"Another, is to become less tolerant of those who walk the Pilgrim Way, and to use their ailments—for are we not all patients?—as a pretence to despise their physician.

"Another, is to prefer in public, the company of those who despise the Pilgrim Way. For that is to stride along with the shameful, stand around with sinners, and sit silently with scoffers.

"Another, is to prefer in private, the company of those who despise the Pilgrim Way. Yea, to boast large, of even small virtues found in them—as if virtue flowed first from them, and thence to lesser streams.

"Another, is to publicly live, as those who despise the Pilgrim Way.

"At last, thinking themselves reawakened to the world, they have fallen asleep unto the king. And may the king have mercy on their souls."

Chapter 48

The Balm of Beulah

Then I saw in my dream, that they now left behind Enchanted Ground, whose enchantment had seemed fair, yet had smelt foul. It had been but pretence, for true enchantment now lay ahead, and not behind. And they entered now into Beulah Land, named after she who was beloved by the king, and was belovèd wife to Immanuel, whose wedding feast was not yet. It now seemed to them to be home, at least as a similitude of their true home. And now they knew that their journey drew to a close, and that slippers awaited them beyond the last river. And from that river, only the prince had returned, who now dwelt over on the other side.

Here, the air was as sweet as a fragrant perfume of red red roses, and they drew deep draughts of pure delight, filling both lungs and souls. And unto their ears, came the sweet cooing of turtle doves, and the warble of wrens, and the swell songs of red red robins. And the pilgrims stayed their journey, and drank in the joy. For it was unto them a season of solace.

"My brother," said Hopeful, "much we have spoken of sin as being our past master, and of manfully facing down the enemy, and of striving forward towards our high

calling. Little have we considered the joys of the way, and the wonders of the prince—for those who will trust and obey. Here now, methinks, we have but a glorious taste of true glories yet to be revealed. Indeed, in the world of Abraham, there were but tasters of the glories of Sinai to come. And in the world of Sinai, there were but tasters of the glories of Immanuel then still to come."

"Yes," said Christian, "it is like climbing up a hill, when each level looks to be the top, yet gives way to a higher, until at last one sees the true top. The road goes ever on, until it leads us to the true entrance. And shall that be but the beginning of the first chapter of a never-ending, always enjoyable, story? And if even here, my heart does almost break for joy, how will it survive the fullness of joy which is beyond? Yet already my heart seems to grow stronger, as does the joy. Too stern we can be over sin, to the overlooking of joy within the way. Yet are there not times and seasons for both? But now is the season of Immanuel, the season to be jolly."

And indeed it was as a magical fairy land, where the sun shone bright both night and day, yet caused neither death nor decay. And from the river, a gentle mist would sometimes water the land. And in this land, the memory of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, was just a name, and the long arm of Giant Despair could not reach, nor could Doubting Castle be clearly remembered, a mist scattered by the sun. There was but one enemy that lay ahead. Yet if that enemy was welcomed as a friend, then a friend it would be.

From here, they could see the shining city in part, and some of the shining ones walking to and fro nearby with gay hearts and happy faces. For they walked on

the borders of the king's land, where heaven and earth kissed in sweet communion. And from heaven, shining ones did sometimes walk in the prince's dominions, and sometimes in the Land Debateable, on missions for their lord. And to mortals they had goodwill.

And this land was like where covenant between bride and bridegroom seemed renewed, where offences were put aside, and where joy was the serious business of marriage. And here was no lack of corn or wine, for it was a place of wholeness, of honeymoon, and of happiness. A place of abundant life, and not mere life, wonderful though new life in itself is.

And songs drifted out from the City built foursquare, songs of joy; songs of hope. "Behold daughter, O fair Zion; Glad walkers on the prince's way. Your saviour comes, the war is won; You him did seek, for him did pray."

And many upon the walls looked out and shouted to one another: "Rejoice, all ye peoples in this city! For here come saints from the prince's dominions, they who lived first in Land Debateable. These have heeded the call, and are redeemed by Yahweh the king, yet more so shall be. Rejoice with exceeding joy!" And horns of triumph were sounded. And yet still a space were they from the city gates. Then a sweet hush descended again, and they walked yet more in peace.

And the closer they came, the greater the sight. For the City built foursquare, once hid by mist and clouds, was built of massive size. It was twelve times a thousand stadia, north to south, east to west, and top to bottom. Its walls—though they could not measure till within—

were of twelve by twelve cubits. And they later recalled the twelve apostles of the slain and slaying lamb, those prophesied by the twelve sons who had been set free.

And behind the walls of jasper, the City was built of gold, and was as pure as glass. And—again they saw with hindsight—twelve foundations had the walls, made of stones inlaid with gems, of what seemed to be jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, carnelian, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, turquoise, jacinth, and amethyst.

Twelve gates of pearl had the City, with streets of soft gold. And its beauty far exceeded the mere greed and pride of the debateable lands, where thieves would break in to steal, kill, and destroy, to gain but one small gem. But the City had no defences, for the only way in, was through death. And what thief would die, for what they could not spend? And the hearts of the pilgrims were pierced by the sheer wonder and beauty.

And the wonder, remaining a wonder, became bearable by degrees. And they walked once more towards the City. And off that road, stood orchards, vineyards, and gardens. And they approached one who seemed to be a gardener. And they asked of him, who was the master of such abundance.

And he replied that the orchards, vineyards, and gardens, were plantings of the king, for his delight, and for the wellbeing of pilgrims seeking the City. And they were let through the gate, and partook of the fruit and the wine therein, and beheld marvellous flowers of kinds unknown to them. And arbours were there,

wherein to sleep and be comforted. And they tarried a while in peace.

And in their sleep they spoke—so said the gardener—of things which in waking life, they would keep private. Yet here there was no need for privacy, and no secrets would hurt, and no face would blush, and no malicious ear would hear, or tongue wag. And as in sleep they spoke, weights were lifted from their minds.

Chapter 49

Shining City, Chilly River

Then I saw in my dream, that when they woke, they looked up, and were dazzled still by the City. And even as one might jump from a cold bath, into a very hot bath, and find it almost unbearable, so the sight of the City was almost unbearable to mortal sight. And yet as if slowly warmed, as they gazed on the City, it became not less bright, but more bearable.

For in Beulah Land, their sight became keener sight. Moreover, at first, two shining ones gave unto them dark glasses, through which to view the City, until their eyes were stronger. And even as from a distance, the shining city had seemed smaller—partly by reason of mist and partly by reason of properties of the air—so it had seemed dimmer. But it was immeasurably larger, and brighter, than it had seemed, and yet it was but another gate.

Hopeful and Christian asked the shining ones if they would escort them into the City. "Nay," they replied, "for at this point, your own faith must do. But we will escort you unto the river." But when they came to that, the pilgrims were at a loss. For the river was wide, and there was neither boat nor bridge.

Then, said one of the shining ones: "We cannot cross this river with you, for it is the lot of mortal man, not of immortals." And the other said: "All your kind must cross it, though it winds throughout your world, both over ground, and under ground. But this is the best place to cross, and you have followed the king's highway to it."

"But is there no other way across?" asked Christian. And the shining ones replied that in fact they had only heard of two—though there might have been more—who were carried in the air over the river. Those two they named, as Enoch, and Eliyah. But, they added, a final trumpet would one day be blown, and perhaps then more would be carried over the river. But whether that would be or not, was for the king to say.

"But is there any shallow, or stepping stones?" asked Hopeful. Smiling, the shining ones replied that the waters could be as shallow for lambs to paddle, or as deep for elephants to swim, and as slight or swift, according to the heart of each pilgrim.

Then, putting trust ahead of fear, the pilgrims did enter the river, and it was as cold as death. When in courage Christian stripped off his armour and readily stepped in, the ripples ran up to his ankles. As he waded in the waters, they came up to knees. As he struggled in the swirl, it came up to his waist. As he battled in the billows, he floundered, and began to sink. Vainly he sought to keep his head above water: "Help me!" he cried. "The waters are up to my neck! I slip, I drown! Help!"

And Hopeful bade him not to fear: "I am at your side, but my feet are firm. It is the king's river. Fear not, only

believe." But Christian, almost unable to talk because of the fear in his heart, and the water in his mouth, blurted out that he was done for... that the cords of death had entangled him... that he could not swim... that he was drowning and lost. And the waves and the darkness and the horror, overtook him at the last. For it was that though a pilgrim, still he harboured doubts as to his welcome by the king, in whose name he had talked the talk, and walked the highway, not the byways. And thus the thing he greatly feared, came upon him, and he sank.

And yet it was not the king's will that he should be lost. Indeed it was not the king's will that any who could be saved, should be lost. And besides, the blood of the prince spoke better things than the blood of Abel. And, in the king's will, Hopeful was by his side. And he reached down, and delivered Christian from the deep. And putting an arm around him, he supported him through the river, and spoke moreover words of good cheer. Even so, ever and anon, Christian's head would go back under, so that rescue was a difficult task. So was talk.

Hopeful had said something like: "I see the gate ahead, and shining ones wait to welcome us." To which Christian had blurted out something about only Hopeful being the one they really awaited, since only he had always been hopeful of welcome.

Hopeful, still struggling to support him, had said something like: "You too have always been hopeful." To which Christian had blurted back, that he no longer was. Indeed, that the king would only let sinners, not

subjects, drown—unmindful that the king himself had placed Hopeful by his side.

Hopeful had said something like: "You pay but the price of mixing faith with fear, for faith shows what you desire, and fear says that you will obtain it not. True faith will not disappoint, but calls you to deeper reliance. Onward Christian soldier. Your prince himself bids you onwards."

Then at last Christian's eyes cleared of water, and he looked, and saw the prince of the City. And he shouted unto Christian, that though he passed through deep waters, he was with him, so he would not be drowned. And that if he passed through raging flames heated seven times, even so he would not be burnt, nor a hair of his head be singed. For the river was not the end but a beginning. And the pilgrims took courage.

And the river bed, after that, was as solid as dry stone, and the current was as calm as a cooing dove. And Christian found his feet arise, until the waters did but splash playfully over them.

For Christian had looked unto the prince, who having written in rough, did now complete, their pilgrim story. And shining ones, messengers of the king, were at the river bank to help them out, and to escort them in high honour, unto the City gate.

Chapter 50

Gloria in Excelsis

Then I saw in my dream, that the pilgrims had one last hill to climb to reach the city of the king. But this they walked with ease, being helped by shining ones. And they discovered that though they still wore robes of righteousness, their other clothing had completely washed away in the river, and had as powder been dissolved. And their robes bespoke the journey that they had taken, and they were cheered by the City.

And the City extended well into the clouds, which at times hid the top and even the gate, even as they hid the sun, which the City needed not. And as if riding up the sky in chariots of fire, the pilgrims sped through the clouds unto the golden gate.

And briefly, the shining ones spoke to them of the glories that awaited, the half of which has never yet been told. On Mount Zion, they said, was the heavenly city of Salem, where shining ones beyond count did dwell, and beyond count the redeemed from among mortal kind. In gardens there, they would see the tree of life, and taste of its never failing fruit. And none would die there, nor weep save by the piercing of pure joy. But the pain of mortal lands would trouble them

no more, for their story had moved on. And the water of life would always be with them, in laughing and carefree abundance.

There they would meet many whose names they had heard tell, for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, would meet them, along with many many more, whose names no story has told. For from all corners of the earth, and from all times of the earth, the redeemed had assembled in worship of the king, and of the prince, and of him they have sent to help those who were lost, and those who were found.

And the pilgrims asked as to what would be their duties within Celestial City, and Celestial Cosmos without. And the shining ones said that they knew not the full answer, for that lay in the mind of the king. But they did know that they would be commanded to enjoy. "Yet," they said, "you will receive rest from your labours, and high honour as royal children of the king. And you will reap from the good you have sown through prayer, worship, obedience, woes, and pains. Laurels of gold you will wear on your heads, as befits those who have blessed and been victorious over the world. And such tokens of victory, will proclaim the victory of the prince whom you love.

"For him you will always see, whether in face, or by his handiwork, which he worked in line with the king and the helper. And such service as we can see, will be as the priestly, whose sacrifices are of praise and gratitude and spiritual worship. For you shall be caught up in the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the Heavenly Dance. For are not the stars as flowers in his playground, and is his playground not for the redeemed? And will you not hear the voice of the

majestic one, whether from lip or echoing from the works of his hands, which he worked with the prince and the helper? For behold, his voice has gone beyond the ends of the earth. And indeed, will you not within you see the face and hear the voice of the holy helper himself, as spirits made perfect?

"And as for bodily garb, your bodies shall be as that of the prince. Verily, discarding not his mortal frame, he raised it up immortal, for he would be at one with his redeemed, and roam with them as they. Yet for now, you shall dwell in safekeeping within the City, until the stage of the wicked be cleansed, and the curtain be lowered. Then, together shall you all go forth with joy, dressed immortal to make revel upon the true stage without end. And there you shall rove content and be riven not.

"And there you will at times encounter many good folk you have known in this life, and many many more from other times and places. And yet you will know all you meet, yet never tire of hearing their stories. Nay, nor of telling them yours. And your stories will be more than of the world that you have left.

"And they who have been father, or sister, or son, or grandmother, or granddaughter, shall be on like level. For the Great Tree above, is not like unto the family trees below. For they were but weak though meaningful shadows, and somewhat as weak grass besides a giant oak—grass withers, flowers wilt. And tasks of that below, of master, or slave, of male, or female, of grandfather, or father, of husband, or wife, of mother, or grandmother, will be no more. For as your brother Paul said well, death unbinds the ties that bind, however blest be the ties that bind. Yea even before this death, did you not die unto the law, that you might belong unto the prince?"

Chapter 51

And the End is Not Yet

Then I saw in my dream, that much more did the shining ones say, both of what they knew, and what they guessed would be. But now they drew near to Great Gate. And they were loudly celebrated before the gate, and proclaimed to be faithful pilgrims of the way.

Then the heavenly host upon the walls, proclaimed: "Blessed are those who are invited to the prince's wedding feast!" For as a bridegroom welcomes his bride deeper into his life, so the prince would welcome his pilgrims deeper into his life beyond the river. Trumpeters and buglers arrayed in white, stood forth, sounding their horns to celebrate the pilgrims, as they drew near to the gate. And the very procession was of heaven to heaven, for the very mountain was blest. And bells pealed from the outer walls, to which Christmas bells were at best a prelude. And Christian and Hopeful knew that at last they had arrived home.

And as they stood at last before the gate, many notables looked down from the walls: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Leah, Joseph, Asenath, Moses, Zipporah, Salmah, Rahab, and yea, far too many here to mention. And many unheard

of, on whom the pilgrims looked and knew their names. And yet the names of none were what they had been, for each name was unique, as each of the redeemed is unique. And those names are hidden, until it is time to unveil them at the apocalypse.

And Christian laid aside his precious scroll, for he had no longer any need of its assurance. But Hopeful had never had one, save within his heart. It had been assured him that the king had given him a new heart, had put a new spirit within him, had exchanged his heart of stone for a heart of flesh, and planted his law deep within his heart.

And they entered then into the City, and were given such clothing as was worn by such of its dwellers who had come from mortal lands. And heralds proclaimed unto them: "Enter in to the joy of your lord and your king." And the pilgrims cried aloud in their joy: "Praise, honour, glory, and power, be laid before the king of kings, and yielded unto the prince, for ever and ever."

Then through the gates of pearly splendour they went into the golden city, which needs no sun nor star to lighten it, whose very streets are of gold, yet as velvet beneath the feet. And the pilgrims strode in, and many crowded the streets to welcome them with great hallel and hello. And sweet sounds surrounded them of stringed instruments, of percussion, and wind instruments too. And the City dwellers sang songs of Zion. And some of the shining ones had wings, and their faces were not of the world. Yet their story need not be told here. They too sang: "Holy, holy, holy, is the king. He always was, he always is, and always he will be."

But at the foot of the mountain stood Ignorance. He had made his own way through Beulah Land. And if he had found his talk with the pilgrims irksome, he had found talk with those of Beulah, even less to his liking. But still he had sought Celestial City, howbeit with more zeal than knowledge. And of the fruits of Beulah, he had not feasted. For to his credit he was honest, and, remaining in ignorance about the joys of pilgrims, feasted not on their fruit.

And thus he came, rather enhungered, unto the river. And there his fears were the less. For, having had little fear of his own sins, he little feared that they would engulf him with guilt. And, having confidence in himself, he thought the river but a small barrier. It might have been otherwise, had he come to the river at a section where stood on the other side a mighty volcano, not a city. But by grace, the City was before him. Indeed, by grace the river seemed calm. Thus it was that Ignorance floated himself across the river. Indeed, some who espied him—though he was hard to see—wondered whether he ferried himself across on vain hope. But no help did he at first receive on the other side. Indeed he floundered a while in the mud. His besetting confidence, did there desert him. And it was only with great difficulty, that he did haul himself ashore in dishevelled state as a floundering fish.

And he bethought himself why such should be. For he had expected to wine and dine in the presence of the king, as he had been taught in Conceit. He had had a rather good opinion about himself. But now, bedraggled and forlorn, he began at last to doubt himself. When he had seen Christian and Hopeful

cross over, he had somewhat pitied them. Yet now he thought of their welcome beyond the river. He knelt down and wept, that no fuss was made of him. Indeed, he had expected more, not none.

And the sun dried the mud on him, so that he trudged as one caked in mud for garments. And only his tears had removed, somewhat, the mud from his eyes. Then unto him came at last a shining one, who began to speak with him, and to wipe away his stains, beginning with his face. "O man," said the shining one, "few at first did see you. For only now, when you are caked in real mud, are you clear to our eyes. For there is less to you, than in your imagination. For those who think overmuch of themselves in the visible world which is before the river, are less visible on this side of it."

And by these words, Ignorance at last feared for his soul. For he saw now that he was insubstantial, having little when he had thought he had much. And he began to wonder whether he would ever wine and dine at the king's table. "Is it then," asked he, "that I am fit only for the fire? For it is said that a way to hell there is, that borders on the very verge of heaven."

And the shining one smiled sadly. "Alas," said he, "you are like a branch that is barren, and has been fit only to be taken away from its vine and burnt. And that bespeaks your lack of fruit. But the grace of the king is not based on your worth, or lack thereof.

"Yet never have you walked the Pilgrim Way as a pilgrim. Thus, you have never enjoyed the Way in the way that the waymaker intended, nor helped any along the Way in the way that he intended. Thus you did walk the Way with loss and with no gain. But behold, see that the Way

lies only the other side of the river, and is to you no more. Therefore, be of good cheer.

"Those who have walked in robes of righteousness, whether hard or smooth their crossing of the river, are easily seen from the City. For truth be told, they have gained in substance, and their garments are recognised. Thus their welcome the more is. For the more, grace is.

"Through ignorance you have not known the prince, nor his father, and therefore missed much before the river. Still, you have sought somewhat the king as the king, and all who seek shall find. You shall henceforth no longer be called Ignorance, but bear within the City a new name.

"As to hell, the river spans the world, and some cross at points where hell, not this city, stands eager to meet them. But be at rest. For none who have truly sought to feast with our king, cross at those points. For all follow their heart to heart's end."

And the face of he who was no longer Ignorance, smiled. Yea, it did glow, for the shining one had wiped it clean. And others came forth from the City, bearing garments pure and white to replace the mud of shame.

And then I awoke. And behold, it had been a dream.

∞

The End

The prince's path to his palace,
Lies through this languid land.
Forthright from fear to fearlessness
Commit to Christ's command.
For love and lord, lag not nor lapse
Stride home from shadowland.
Through gates of pearl, by God's own grace
Soon we'll as spirits stand.

Some Personal Departures

The dream has ended, the day has begun. In his conclusion, Bunyan happily admitted that what he called dross, might well be found within his story. In short, he said, if you find any, keep the gold, chuck the ore; eat the apple, toss the core. I like that attitude. After all, we all make mistakes, and this side of the river, theology is not perfect. John Wesley made a similar point about his own doctrines: teach me better doctrines, and I'll follow them. But—with a smile—Bunyan concluded that if his *whole* work was in vain, well, he would simply have to dream all over again.

Perhaps in some ways, I have always either disagreed with, or reserved judgement on, some parts of his dream. Certainly I disagree somewhat some things I once agreed with. In *Revisiting*, I have re-dreamed it but seldom in storypart, yet somewhat more in storyline. The theological market yo-yoed poor old Saint Athanasius for decades—in and out of fashion, refusing to believe just one irksome little iota: a small difference can go a long way. Am I Arius to Bunyan?

It might be that I have stuck my oar in, turning gold to dross. If, as I hope, I one day meet Bunyan, it might be I who eats the humble pie—if it is baked in heaven. But perhaps, even if turning some gold to ore, I might help future readers to think through what some have deemed to be underlying debateables within his story.

They might find with Bunyan, or with myself, or indeed with something with which Bunyan and I would debate them—and we might lose.

∞

1# I would rather briefly talk through, than merely bullet point, my more meaningful points of departure. First, let me say that the main has been, I think, what some have called the Wider Hope. Admittedly, it is a wide and rather undefined term—or say rather that it has multiple definitions, even as Bunyan had two characters named Mistrust.

In the early days of the church, many leaders—later called Church Fathers—tended to think in terms of two circles of salvation. An inner circle for Christians, and an outer circle for God-aligned non-Christians. More recently, John Calvin held that had Cornelius died before hearing Peter, he would still have had life everlasting with God. Even when the baptismal-regeneration idea grew apace, the church—at least in the West—held that wider salvation applied still to non-Christians. The smaller circle remained as only for those within the church—a rich domain of salvation: Hans Küng's *salus intra ecclesiam* (salvation inside the church). Rome spoke of heretics leaving the *inner* circle of salvation: Rome's *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the church, no salvation). As to whether their subsequent fate was deemed to be within the outer circle, I venture not. Bunyan seemed to imply that the man in the iron cage, was ultimately damned—I demur.

The inner circle salvation (Christianity) became the best focus circle, and slowly for most it became the only

circle. And in the Reformation (and Radical Reformation), those who came to reject Rome, tended, I think, to run with Rome's later idea that the inner circle was the only focus circle. And they disagreed over how people got into that circle. Some held Rome's belief—*by water baptism*—but rejected Rome's priests. Some held water-baptism wasn't a way in to salvation, and tended to preach entrance by individual *welcome*-belief in Christ—unlike the *un*welcome-belief of Jas.2:19. And if dismissing an outer non-Christian circle of salvation, dismissed heretics and heathen as eternally lost, as the dross of hell, rather than the gold or silver of heaven.

Bunyan drempt that some characters who disregarded Christianity, were dumped into damnation (as was Demas). Indeed, only after dreaming that Ignorance was dragged off to the eternal fire, did Bunyan awake. I have re-dreamed of Ignorance as saved *within the outer circle*: saved a God-seeker, not a Christ-seeker; saved a Cornelian, not a Christian. This is Wider Hope.

"Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe; For ignorance of what they could not know?" These are question-lines from songwriter William Cowper. He called any who said Yes, *bigots*! His friend, John Wesley, also held Wider Hope Inclusivism, but he still got on with his job of evangelism. Long before them, Church Fathers such as Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus, held to Wider Hope. It was out of fashion in the Middle Ages, but Peter Abelard believed it.

We could speak of Narrow Hope teaching, or use its more technical term Exclusivism. Within it, some have even taken unfruitfulness in Christian discipleship, to

lead to hell. Espousing Narrow Hope, evangelical Don Carson, in his deep commentary on John's Gospel, nevertheless corrected the false idea that Jhn.15:6 spoke of eternal damnation for fruitless Christians. To that extent, Carson was more Wider Hope than some divines of the past (including Bunyan). I stand more Wider Hope than Carson. Some, holding to Universalism, are Widest Hope! See my *Salvation Now and Life Beyond*, book *et al*. My position is Inexclusivism: exclusive Christianity; inclusive theism.

If we speak of four Levels (to wit, Adam/Sinai/Christian/Heaven), Bunyan's story features all four—Acharin leaves Adam (**Level 1**) and at the Gate directly becomes *Christian* (**L3**). In his Christian exodus (L3 to **L4**), Christ saves him from Moses (**L2**). Crossing the final Jordan, he enters the final Canaan (L4). With John Wesley and John Bunyan, I argue that people can jump directly from L1 to L3, and could from L2 to L4. With Wesley but against Bunyan, I argue that people can jump directly from L1 to L4 because of Christ, and I commend evangelism as commanded for the blessing of man with salvation/heaven/assurance *within mortal life*. Since the Dawn of Man, the Door of Heaven has always been open by the cross to whosoever will enter.

Since salvation is not *only* about Ultimate Heaven, we're talking about vistas, privileged insights/lifestyles through exclusive *doors* (as Sinai's closed, Christ's opened: Jhn.14:6), levels blessing some but cursing none. Going deeper, has each Level a deific Name/Fellowship/Insight-level? Is *Elohim*/*God* for all Adam's L1 people? Was *Yahweh* the deliverer to L2 through exodus, only for Sinai's people? Is *Yeshua* the deliverer through

exodus to L3, only for Christians? Is *Yahweh-God* (Gen.2:7 fulfilled) for L4, by the final exodus into the final Canaan? In Col.3:11, παντα εν πασιν means essential for L3. 1 Cor.15:28, παντα εν πασιν means God the father as father reigning within all the redeemed in L4.

If salvation was *only* about Ultimate Heaven, it'd filter folk out eternally. Did Sinai eternally *filter out* Common humanity, and Christianity *filter out* Sinai? Had the Door of Heaven once been the Common door, allowing at least a few through? Then had the Sinai door become the only Door of Heaven, immediately cursing/excluding the Common world, some slipping through even moments before Sinai, but never after Sinai began? No, Sinai was but the inner-circle door.

Had the Door of Heaven once been the Sinai door, allowing at least a fewer few through? Then had the Christian door become the only Door of Heaven, immediately cursing/excluding the Sinai world, some slipping through even moments before Christianity, but never after Christianity began? No, Christianity is but the inner-circle door into glory.

2# I have also departed from Bunyan as to some names. For instance, whereas he used postconversion names, such as *Christian*, *before* conversion, I have felt free to de-Christianise names before conversion, to better contrast physical and spiritual birth (Jhn.3:3). Admittedly, while people are only Christian *in reality* after conversion, some are Christian *in name* before. After the river, all Earthbound names will change.

3# I have also pictured the Pilgrim Way—begun at the Wicket Gate—as a road within what we may call,

Churchianity. Some speak of the Church Visible (Churchianity), and the Church Invisible (Christianity). Churchianity is, I think, a good name, and a good circle in its own right: I am a Churchian. An intersecting circle is Christianity: I am a Christian, too. Some live only within Churchianity, and even Vanity Fair intersects with Churchianity. Its citizens can have a form of godliness but lack its inner power. Bunyan had a problem with both Rome and Canterbury. They in turn had problems with Puritans like himself.

I would highlight Hopeful, who as a resident of Vanity Town, became a pilgrim. Interestingly, he did not need to journey to the Wicket Gate, the entrance point of conversion for Christian. Nor at any point did Bunyan speak of Hopeful being given, what elsewhere Bunyan (and Christian) seemed to think essential for entrance to heaven, namely a scroll or certificate. Perhaps Formalist and Hypocrisy fared ill not because they refused to humbly seek the Gate, but because they refused to humbly seek pardon.

Yet lacking such a scroll, some are bluntly told to either get one, or be damned. A curious oversight by Bunyan? I have taken the scroll as helpful to personal assurance of entrance to heaven (Celestial City), but not a gate-pass, though Christian presumed that Formalist needed it, but that Hopeful did not.

4# Bunyan also, interestingly, had a section of road between Wicket-Gate conversion, and the cross of Christ. Preparationism? This has confused many. I have focused on a Gateway experience, as the point of becoming a Christian, and the latter as showing that

true Christians (like Hopeful) can still lack a personal revelation of the cross, and personal assurance of being forgiven. So, instead of shining ones *giving* Christian three gifts at Golgotha, I have them *unpack* gifts given at the Gate from the Debateable Lands. Indeed, we can perhaps see in Hopeful's story, a Gateway within Churchianity to enter into Christianity and to walk the Pilgrim Way as a Christian, not merely as a Churchian.

Some believers flatly dismiss the idea of personal assurance of evangelistic—or 'entrance'—forgiveness. Partly because, they say, it can lead to complacency in holiness (*antinomianism*). Bunyan dismissed that charge (made by Ignorance). Bunyan rightly said that superior Christianity is not about *either* assurance *or* holiness, but about *both* assurance *and* holiness.

5# Another curiosity is Faithful. He came through both Gate and Golgotha. Yet he still held a strange fear of the Avenger of Blood. It is a complicated set of ideas, which afflicted Bunyan in real life. My treatment of that, might not be quite how Bunyan treated it. He certainly had a closer Old Testament feel for the Pilgrim Way, than I do. I do not picture Sinai and Golgotha as both heading directly to heaven, as if one highway of two types of traffic. Indeed, I picture the Sinai Way as having led only to Golgotha, before being closed. And I picture a new road built, with Vanity Fair having been relocated as jaws around a section of the new road, as had been with the old.

6# Some remains in Bunyan's dream, might be vestigial, earlier references removed perhaps from Bunyan's earlier drafts. In one early draft of one of my

fantasy writings, I featured a lady in Place A, then had her active later in Place B. In later draft, I killed her off in Place A, but left her very much alive and kicking in Place B! Such a gaffe is easily done. Poor John worked in jail, drafting and redrafting. And slight tweaking followed—all without a word processor!

In the published work, Christian mentioned having previously met Faint-heart, Mistrust, and Guilt. But even the first version (1678) lacks any previous reference to these "three villains". And in Doubting Castle, Christian remembers a key, which again lacks any previous reference. The "three villains", I have suggested, were previously only met as characteristic attitudes, not as allegorical characters. The key, I have suggested, had been given at the cross.

7# Bunyan used Wednesday (ch.34) to signify the then common Puritan midweek devotion day, but overtaken here by despair until a Lord's Day (Sunday) resurrection for them. He did not trace Jesus' death/resurrection, on which I add a few short notes below.

Briefly, it seems to me that all four Gospels fully agree (Norval Geldenhuys) as to Jesus having partaken on Thursday evening (Nisan 15), of the Passover Lambs (slain Thursday afternoon, Nisan 14)—days ended/began at sunset. On Friday afternoon, his body was entombed (Nisan 15), remaining over the special Sabbath (Nisan 16), and the early part of Sunday morning (Nisan 17) of Passover Week. All in all, perhaps 40 hours, and on the third day he arose the victor from the dark domain.

In rabbinical talk, a daytime and a nighttime made an *onah*, and even a part-onah could be treated as a

whole-onah. (We use 'day' similarly.) "Three days and three nights", can range from three full 24-hour days, to two part-days (eg before dusk, Nisan 15; before dawn, Nisan 17) sandwiching a full day (Nisan 16).

Yes, the expression, "three days and three nights", had wiggle room for interpretation, and could poetically double for 'three days' (two nighttimes). We might say that "after three days" could sometimes mean "on the third day" (2 Chr.10:5,12), as well as sometimes mean, on the fourth: imprecision, wiggle. But even taking a part-onah to be spoken of as seemingly a full onah, we can see how part of Nisan 17 could end the "three days/ nights", and also allow for a further event—resurrection—after/on that same third day.

So, 4 hours on Nisan 15, 24 on Nisan 16, and 12 on Nisan 17, could equal "three days". Jesus rose on Nisan 17 (Sunday morning), after 'resting' on two nights, in full or in part. Mt.12:40 allows that wiggle. Arguably a Wednesday crucifixion theory runs against resurrection "on the third day", though some claim a Sabbath resurrection and Sunday discovery.

8# I have sought throughout, where I thought appropriate, to make mentions about deity more oblique, as befits allegory and parables but not preaching. So for instance, Bunyan referred to his prince, and to Christ, as one and the same; to his king, and to God [the father], as one and the same. I have harmonised all stand-alone references, to the prince, and to the king his father, respectively.

9# Not quite a departure, but some comment on imagery. For long I toggled between Bunyan's the-

cross-behind-me image, and other pilgrims who sang of the-cross-before-me. Isaac Watts' burdens rolled away at the cross, while George Bennard clung to the old rugged cross. It is a biblical paradox. Unrepeated water-baptism looks back to the cross; the repeated eucharist looks forward and sideward to the cross. Paul spoke of unrepeatably having put to death the fallen nature (Gal.5:24), yet of repeatably putting it to death (Rm.8:13). Bunyan's sequel sang of daily carrying one's cross: the roots of the chopped down tree, still live.

10# Finally, a short comment. Some accuse Acharin of having walked out on his wife and family. That is more a cult, than a Christian, thing to do, and Bunyan was not an advocate of it. (Notwithstanding IMO, there *is* biblical leeway for separation, and *are* narrow biblical grounds for divorce which alone *justify* divorce and permit marrying another maritally-obligation-free person. And though non-biblical divorces are valid, residual obligations to either celibacy or reunion, may preclude adultery-free remarriage.)

Anyway, the charge is true in allegory, but not in reality. In reality, 'Christian' stayed with them as husband and father. In reality, they simply could not journey with him on his inner journey ('dream'). But, we may add, simply knowing that they could not follow, encouraged them (in allegory and reality) to think through spiritual matters. And in fact, eventually they followed, they who could not have done so had he not led the way. A much fuller story of them was told by Bunyan, in his more pastoral sequel.

Books by this Author

Theology

Israel's Gone Global

Israel's Gone Global traces salvation through the term, Israel. Was the covenant with the people-nation of Yakob-Yisrael, crossed out? How eternal is covenant? To examine that, we examine marriage. Can a covenant partner be truly divorced? Has Yeshua-Yisrael mediated a spiritual covenant with a spiritual Israel? Is evangelism of ethnic Jews needless, a priority, or neither?

No one could have everlasting life but for the cross, but has it always been globally accessible? Might any who die as Atheists, Hindus, or Islamists, make heaven? And is eternal life joyful? Is everlasting life fun?

Tackling the question of people who die in infancy (or as adults who never heard the gospel), we consider whether it is fair if only those who don't die in infancy get a chance of eternal damnation (if infant universalism), or alone get a chance of eternal heaven (if infant damnation). Does predilectionism make best sense of biblical revelation?

Opportunities to enjoy eternal life spring from the new covenant—reasons to rejoice. But what about salvation history before that covenant?

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Singing's Gone Global

Singing's Gone Global, briefly explores the background of singing, before and into ancient Israel. It examines the impact songs have on those who sing, and on those who listen, touching on spiritual warfare. It looks at how nonsense songs neither make sense to evangelism, nor to the evangelised, and asks, "Is there a mûmak in the room?"

Oddly some songwriters simply misunderstand prayer. Part two covers the basics of the trinity, focusing on the spirit in order to understand types of prayer (eg request, gratitude, adoration, chat), leading in turn to a better understanding of our heavenly father, our brother, our helper, and ourselves in Christ's likeness.

Next we look at some common problems. Part three focuses on problems such as buddyism, decontextualising, misvisualisation, and unitarianism. Diagnosis can help Christ's 'bride' to recover from suboptimal and unbiblical songs (Eph.5:18-30).

Giving a Problem Avoidance Grade (PAG)—an A+ to Unsatisfactory scale—in part four we examine specific songs. Weapons forged (Part three), the mûmakil can be attacked, seeking to save and be saved.

Subsequently the book concludes by showing how Christmas carols may be tweaked to better serve our weary world, rejoicing that joy to the world has come.

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The Word's Gone Global

The Word's Gone Global, examines Bible text (trusted by early Islam) and introduces textual critique. It looks at the Eastern Orthodox Bible and the Latin Vulgate. Did the Reformation improve text and translation? Were Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Martin, helpful?

Why did the New International Version begin, and why does it enrage? Why did complementarians Don Carson and Wayne Grudem, clash? Is marketing hype between formal and functional equivalence, meaningless? Which version or versions should you regularly read?

In English-speaking circles, Broughton wished to burn Bancroft's King James Version, yet many KJV proponents—think Gail Riplinger and Peter Ruckman—wish to burn all alternatives. More heat than light?

Grade Charts cover 30+ English versions on issues such as God's name, God's son's deity, marriage, gender terms, anti-polytheism, and issues in John's Gospel such as whether Tyndale was 'born again' and John antisemitic, and whether he disagreed with the other Gospels—all No!

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Prayer's Gone Global

Prayer's Gone Global, begins with ancient civilisations and prayer (the Common Level). Then it narrows into Ancient Israel and prayer (the Sinai Level). Then it deepens and widens into Global Israel and prayer (the

Christian Level). Deity is revealed as trinity: Sabellians mislead.

Relating to the trinity includes the Holy Spirit. We should of course work with him, but should we worship him, complain to him, chat with him? Above the spirit stands the often forgotten father—oh let Jesusism retire.

Authority is another issue. Are we authorised to decree and declare? Is binding and loosing actually prayer, or is it evangelism? Is it biblical never to command miracles? Do we miss out on the supernatural which Jesus modelled for us, too fearful of strange fire to offer holy fire?

You can freshen up your prayer life—ride the blessed camel, not the gnats. Listen to Saint Anselm pray, and C S Lewis and 'Malcolm' discuss prayer, and be blessed.

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Revelation's Gone Global

Revelation's Gone Global, is a telling of John's future, as if by a then contemporary named Sonafets speaking to his church about how John's apocalyptic scroll related to their days, and about what was still future to John.

Encouragement is a big theme. Roman persecution was an unpredictable beast which ferociously lashed out here and there—what church or Christian was safe? But God stood behind the scenes, allowing but limiting their enemy, and messiah walked among the churches, lights to the world.

Victory lay neither with Rome nor demons, but with God, and with the warrior lamb who had been slain. Victory was guaranteed, and would finally be enjoyed.

Exhortation was given to believers, to play their part while on the mortal stage. They were to walk in the light, and not to let the show down by straying.

Angels of power, actively working out God's will, far exceed the puny forces against God and his church. His wrath was not pleasant, but could be redemptive until the new age begins.

C S Lewis' essay, The World's Last Night, is briefly examined to enjoin a calm awareness of the ongoing battle we are in, and the brightness to come when the king returns.

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The Father's Gone Global

Focusing from God as father, to the specific person of God the father, The Father's Gone Global looks at the biblical parent/child pattern from Genesis, through Sinai, and into the Church.

Abba as a new covenant word expresses deep filial affection even under deep anguish in our Gethsemane battles. Coming through God's belovèd son, it speaks into the church and into our lives.

Though to many the 'forgotten father', human parents/fathers should 'put on' God the father, and his children should 'put on' his son. We forget him to our cost.

Human applications aside, what is the Eternal Society? Is filial relationship modelled by God the son

incarnate? Are we to be always obedient to our father and guided by the spirit?

Eschatologically the father will be supreme, but even now he is the one to whom the son points. Christian life should relate to God our father, God our brother, and God our helper, prioritising the father.

Renewal of the church is vital for our confused world, but renewal which downplays the father falls short of the good news which Christ created and the spirit circulates. May this book play its part.

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Salvation Now and Life Beyond

Salvation Now, divides the doctrine of salvation into the four main levels of common humanity, the old covenant, the new covenant, and life beyond.

A big weight is put on the term, Israel, as God's master plan. This too has four levels, meaning a man, a people, a new man, and a new people, respectively.

Various ideas of what Christianity, the new covenant for the new people, is good for, and how we get into it and best enjoy it, are examined, and a faith-based inexclusivism is suggested.

Everlasting life is seen as the ultimate goal of salvation, universal meaningfulness and love beyond all fears and pains.

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Revisiting

Revisiting The Challenging Counterfeit

Revisiting The Challenging Counterfeit, is an extended review of Raphael Gasson's 'The Challenging

Counterfeit' (1966). Raphael was an ethnic Jew whose spiritual journey included many years as a Christian Spiritualist minister.

Today, when psychic phenomena captures the imagination and the bank accounts of popular media, it is useful to unearth the witness of one who had well worn the T-shirt of a medium with pride, only to bury it in unholy ground as a thing of shame and of sorrow and of wasted time.

Challengingly, his book exposes what true Spiritualism is. He had nothing but high praise for Spiritualists, and deep condemnation for Spiritualism. For he had discovered true Spiritualism to be itself a fake of true Spirituality, a mere Counterfeit that, in deposing death in the mind, enthroned it in the soul.

Counterfeit phenomena covered include apparitions, Rescue Work and haunted houses, materialisation of pets, psychic healing, Lyceums, clairvoyance, and OOBEs—to name but a few. This book surveys his exposé of Spiritualism's offer of fascinating fish bait, false food falling short of real food for the soul. Though it takes issue with Raphael on a number of points, his core insights are powerful and timely, helping us to avoid—or escape from—a Challenging Counterfeit, and to discover true spiritual currency.

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Revisiting The Pilgrim's Progress

Revisiting The Pilgrim's Progress, is a re-dreaming of John Bunyan's most famous dream. An ex-serviceman and ex-jailbird, he found fortune, freedom, and fans worldwide.

This dream journey is substantially Bunyan's from this world, and into that which is to come. It is not a fun story, but it has lots of danger, and joy, and reflection on some big life themes.

Profoundly, sinners who become pilgrims become saints. But that can make life more difficult. One big question is, Is it worth it? One big temptation is, Turn back or turn aside. And if you see others do so, that makes it harder not to. Bunyan was tempted. And he discovered that not deserting, can lead to despair. But he also discovered a key to liberty.

Pre-eminently, it is a story of grace which many follow. Grace begins the journey, helps along the way, and brings the story to a happily ever after. Are all fairy stories based on heaven?

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Fantasy

The Simbolinian Files

From Simboliniad, a crystal planet long gone, came the vampire race, the wapierze, thelodynamic shapeshifters seeking blood. Most oppose Usen, King of the Light, so side with the Necros. Seldom do the Guardians intervene. These files, secretly secured from various insider sources, reveal something of what they have done, and will do.

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Vampire Redemption

Artificial intelligence, created by superpowers to save man, questions man's worth, and becomes The Beast. Escaping into the wild, many discover a wilderness

infested by zombies and diabolical spirits. Who will help? Father Doyle? He's tied up with the mysterious Lilith. Tariq? He's tied up with Wilma. Can the bigoted old exorcist deliver him from evil?

Radical problems can require radical solutions. But does man really need hobs, elves, and the more ancient of days? In the surrounding shadows, vampires and demons form an alliance, raising the stakes against Whitby and Tyneside. Powerful vampires live shrouded within Whitby, speaking of life beyond this galaxy. Is salvation in the stars? Is Sunniva, the despised woman of Alban, worth dying for? Big questions, needing big answers. Not even Guardian Odin can foretell man's fate and, as silent stars go by, one little town must awake from its dreams.

Though The Beast slumbers purposeless and undisturbed, in the far west a global giant slowly opens its yellow eyes and threatens to smother the earth in fire and ice. There is one chance only.

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Vampire Extraction

Bitterly long their imprisoned spirits lay, fast bound to Earth's drowsy decay. To the Simbolinian race, there was no hell on Earth, for Earth was hell, and Usen the cosmic jailer. Was it so surprising that as vampires they stalked Usen's children for blood? Most chose the Kingdom of Night, wary of both the Kingdom of Necros and the Kingdom of Dawn.

As queen of the Night, Lilith's story streams through the summer sands of Sumer, and through the green woods of Sherwood. It flags up both dishonour and joy,

and cuts across the paths of Ulrica the Saxon and Robin the Hood, as tyrannies rise and fall in merry England. Bigotry seldom has a good word to say about Usen, nor about mercy. Reluctantly, Lilith examines what it means to show mercy, to show weakness. Wulfgar had enslaved Ulrica: is it mercy to let her burn; should mercy have spared Lona? Could Hamashiach turn daughter into sister? Could Count Dracula be turned from his madness? Has Draven really betrayed his mother? Life has many questions.

Tales picture ideas, letting us walk through the eyes of others to better see ourselves. This story exposes subplots behind common history. How these chronicles came to be written up is, in the spirit confidentiality, not for the public eye. What truth is within you must judge. Discrimination is a gift from Beyond, from which the words still echo: mercy is better than sacrifice. Indeed mercy can be sacrifice. Judge well.

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Vampire Count

Vampires were not always earthbound, nor are all evil, but being victims of Usen's Eighth Law, his Children became their fair game. Yet the Night Kingdom was divided: some veered to the Necros; some to the Dawn. Who was wrong; who was right?

Long ago one incited his people to racial violence against elven and human kinds. Ever he strove to be king of the Night, and unto Necuratu the Dark Lord he gave the dragon shape. He made war upon the ancient

Middle East, even the Nephilim War. Against him the Light raised flood and division.

At last his own people, paying the price of his rampage, bound him in deep sleep. Yet the millennia seemed meaningless to him: even the rising of Hamashiach hardly disturbed his dreams. At last awoken, he and his brides stalked the hills of Transylvania. Only the fear of Lilith—and after her unforgivable sin, Queen Rangda—chained their bloodlust.

Dracula sought escape and autonomy. By cunning and devious means, he immigrated to London via Whitby. Pursuit followed swiftly, with a shadowminder helping a circle of human headhunters, though they sought the death of all vampires.

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Vampire Grail

Wulfgar is a vampire, a thelodynamic creature from another galaxy, now locked into our world by one called the Cosmic Jailer. He hides a tormenting secret from his queen, Lilith, which the Necros use as blackmail. She will only go so far with the Necros against Hamashiach—Wulfgar must go further.

Unknown to the Darkness, to bury Hamashiach is to plant the Light. From the buried seed springs life, and humanity must reimagine itself. Longinus turns to The Way, the nexus of the Seventh Age. His spear goes on a special mission to the island of Briton, where Wulfgar lives again.

Logres is centred on Avalon, but raises up Arthur, a man of mixed race, to carry its flag and to protect against the Saxons. But its main enemy is the

Darkness, which ever seeks to extinguish the Light it hates and fears.

Finally, it seems as if the Darkness has won, and the dark ages descend. But does the Light not shine in the Darkness? Must Wulfgar remain in the Night?

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Vampire Shadows

Dark vampires, hidden within the ancient empire of Khem, fall out with the king who, stirred up by the Necros, enslaves the Sheep People. But Iahveh, the shepherd-divinity, is stirred up, and stirs up a hidden hero to force a way out.

Apprehensively the two vampire-magicians join the Sheep of Iahveh, on their long and deadly trek in search of a promised land. Can any survive?

Warily they ask deep questions. Is Usen evil, as prejudice says? Is he possibly a good jailer? Are his unusual regulations, meaningful? They risk ending up in death.

Neverendingly the Sheep's sorry story drags out in interminable peregrination. Weary of wandering, most would settle for some green pastures and untroubled waters. But as they well know, that would take a miracle